



Pax et bonum.

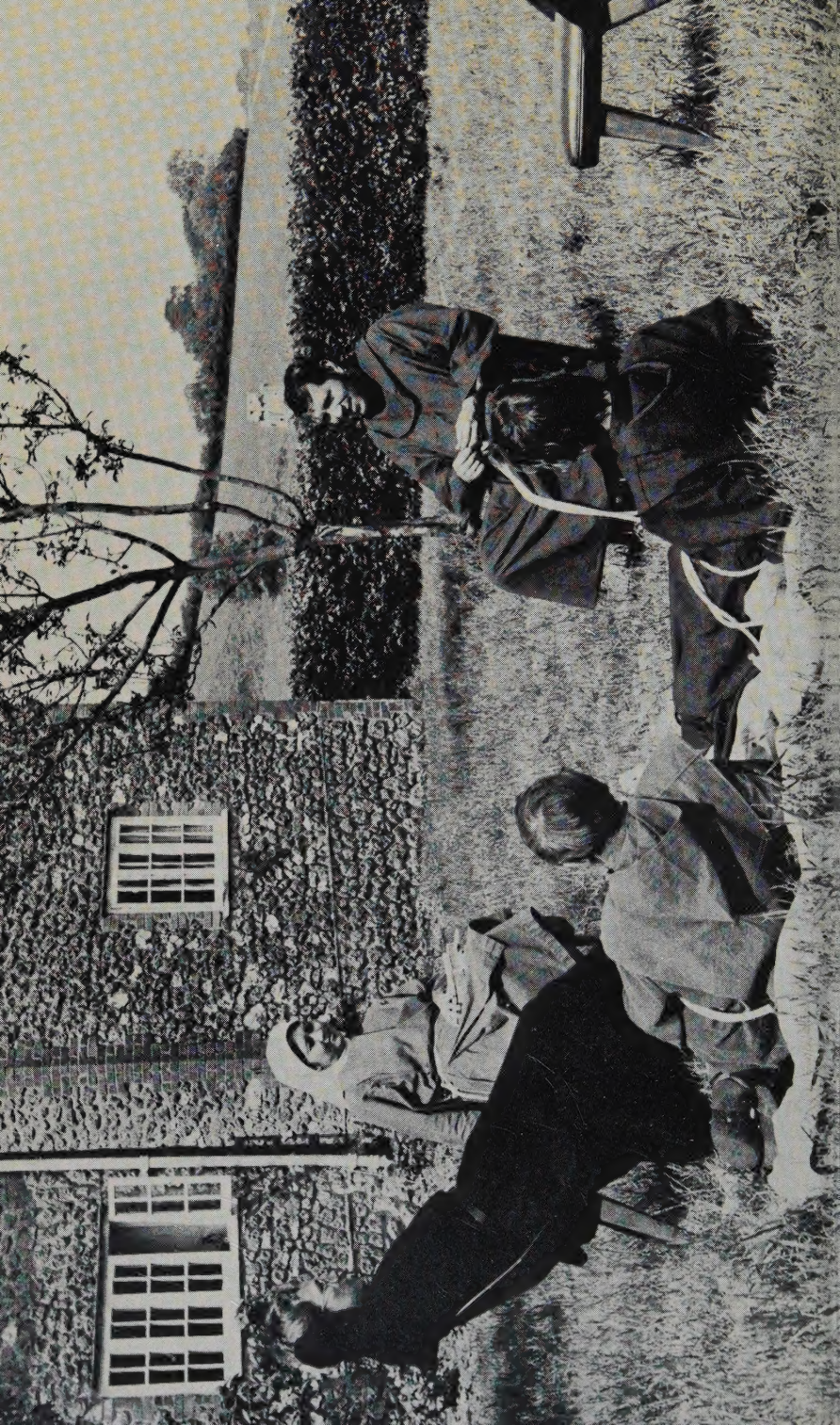
THE FRANCISCAN

Vol. XVII No. 4 September, 1975

CONTENTS

THE LIVING ARTS	....	....	....	161
THE MINISTER GENERAL'S LETTER	....	....	....	162
QUARTERLY CHRONICLE	....	....	....	164
WHAT DID YOU SAY, BROTHER FRANCIS ?	....	....	....	183
THE LIVING ARTS :				
AN ALLEGORY : IN THE NAME OF . . .	....	....	....	186
THE LIVING THEATRE	....	....	....	189
THE ARTS IN WORSHIP	....	....	....	193
CHRISTOPHER FRY	....	....	....	200
THE BARON AND THE POOR MAN	....	....	....	211
FOR FRANCIS, ASSISI '71	....	....	....	218
BOOKS	....	....	....	219

*A Discussion Group at the Novice Conference
at Hilfield*



The Living Arts



THE relationship of the Christian church to the arts whether of the visual kind (painting, sculpture, etc.) or of the living kind (theatre, music, etc.) has often been an ambiguous one. Pictorially, the church has swung between the veneration of images and the criticisms of the iconoclastic controversy and the puritan reformers. The relationship of drama to the church has equally passed through many stages. In the early church, to be an actor (like being a soldier) was a profession that disqualified a person from being baptised.

Yet, it was in the church and through its liturgy that European drama was reborn in the middle ages, first in slightly dramatised forms of the Easter liturgy, with clerics playing the part of the three Marys at the sepulchre, and later in the more elaborate cycles of mystery plays stretching from Creation to Judgement. Gradually theatre moved out of the church into the market place and later into the theatres.

The separation of theatre and church led to the puritan antagonism to the former and the neglect of drama by the latter.

In our own century, we have seen the rediscovery of religious drama by T. S. Eliot, Dorothy L. Sayers and others. Perhaps even more important is the use of religious ideas and motifs by secular dramatists, writers and artists often trying desperately hard to fill the spiritual vacuum of a post-Christian society. In a recent play 'Equus' by Peter Shaffer, the young boy who adores horses and yet is in a psychiatric hospital after blinding six of them, cries out in agony, 'Without worship I die'.

The insights of drama, music, song and play are also being fed back into the life and worship of the Church—occasionally with misconceived and disastrous results ! But such insights and means of expression of the human spirit and body can often release us from the aridities of an over-intellectual faith which so often fails to light up the heart.

For Franciscans, the living art of true worship is provided by the vision of creation as expressed by Saint Francis in his Canticle of the Creatures where he summons all the elements of the universe to dance and sing their praise before the Lord. 'O most high, almighty, good Lord God : to you belong praise, glory, honour and all blessing'.

The Minister General's Letter

July, 1975.

My dear friends,

I have recently spent some time in what is usually termed the Far East.

In Hong Kong I was visiting our small but lively group of Companions. Also I went to see Brother Bernard who since Easter has been living in a small cottage in the New Territories, not far from the Chinese border. His prime object has been to have a time of quiet prayer, but also he has used this time to study Buddhism and Chinese Communism. I am so glad he is doing this as we need as a Society to grow in a first hand knowledge of both. The influence of Buddhism, always strong in the East is now spreading in the West, while Communism, though some of its tenets are manifestly wrong, is unquestionably growing not only in Asia, but in Africa too, and we need a thorough understanding not only of its theory but much more of the way it works in practice. I hope we shall all benefit from Bernard's study at first hand, which is to culminate in a stay at the Australian Embassy in Peking before his return to England.

In Singapore I conducted a retreat for our Third Order when six were made novices and there was one new postulant. They are situated in the southern part of Peninsula Malaysia and Sarawak as well as in Singapore itself. Do remember them in your prayers as they try to live the Gospel life after the example of S. Francis.

The Communist successes in Vietnam and Cambodia are bound to have a profound influence on Malaysia and Singapore and no doubt they will be under increasing political pressure in the years to come. Also with the Malaysian Government becoming aggressively Moslem it means more difficulties for the Christian community.

From Singapore I visited the Oxford Mission Brothers and Sisters of the Epiphany in Calcutta and Bangladesh. Brother Wayne and I were made very welcome and we were able to see a great deal, including several of Mother Teresa's houses in Calcutta where many, both young and old, are rescued and cared for lovingly.

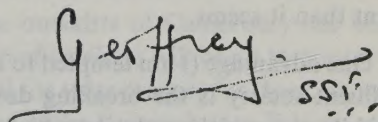
We were also taken to see an interesting new agricultural development a few miles from Calcutta. We met the man who had been

largely responsible for turning this depressed area into one of hope and enthusiasm and had caused the yield from the land to increase by three hundred per cent. This was due to the building of one hundred and fifteen miles of canals which ran off from a sewer that flowed through the centre of this land. The whole was done by the local people at very small cost. By having the right man with the necessary ability and imagination who can inspire and work with the local people the whole area has been transformed and the people given new hope. This is the kind of aid and development advocated by E. F. Schumacher in his book *Small is Beautiful* and it was encouraging to see it really happening.

In Bangladesh I found much that was heartbreaking. In spite of all the efforts of the Government there is a dual failure. The first is that many young students who pass their degrees at the University cannot find suitable work and so return to College to study for another degree not because they want to but because they don't know what else to do. The second failure is that poverty is on the increase. Apart from voluntary institutions there seems to be no help for the desperately poor other than begging. The Oxford Mission are doing all they can to alleviate distress both in Calcutta and Barisal by training boys and girls for jobs so that they can help themselves. In Barisal the Sisters at their hospital are now giving a meal to at least some of the very under-nourished babies who are brought for medical treatment, but this is limited by their resources both financial and in personnel.

In this whole area where the needs are so great, where the Church is so small and where those who are trying to help are so few, we give thanks for their heroic self-giving, and pray that increasingly in the future we may be able to share their burdens.

With my love and prayers,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey', followed by a horizontal line and the initials 'SSF'.

Minister General.

For Bookbinding

Any bookbinding tools, leather or similar materials which readers may have to spare would be welcomed by the Brother Bookbinder at the Friary, Hilfield.

Quarterly Chronicle

Brother Michael writes :

EUROPEAN PROVINCE What a summer ! With farmers longing for rain it sometimes seems wrong to enjoy so much sun. One bonus was that all our summer gatherings took place without the anxious expectation of a sudden dash for shelter. In many ways the most important occasion was a conference at Hilfield for all our novices, with a large crowd of brothers and sisters—some under canvas—sharing not only the sun, but praying, talking, singing and just being together. It was particularly good that Geoffrey could be with us, together with Wayne who represented the Pacific Province, Henry who came over to represent the Americans and James Anthony to speak for the African brothers with their growing noviciate.

At Plaistow we had a tea party in the garden. (It always surprises people who see the garden there for the first time ! Not just its size but its sheer beauty !—thanks largely to the loving care given it over the years by John Hunter). As it was on a Sunday, the Bishop very kindly came for the afternoon, between morning and evening preachments, to meet friends of the Society from all over London. Members of the other Religious Communities dropped in for a while ; Mark's friends made during his work in prisons ; parents of a number of our brethren ; Harrow School was well represented as we have had a recent head-boy helping Christian with structural work inside the House (that's looking quite good too) ; social workers, teachers ; our neighbours from the Baptist Church and the R.C. Sisters ; but most important of all, just those people who live near us round about. In the middle of it all someone said to me, ' What's it all about ?—What do you hope to get out of it ?—there's no sermon or service, no prayers—not even a collection ! '. The question, like the occasion, is a little more important than it seems.

One advantage (I am tempted to say almost the only advantage) of an affluent society is the breaking down of old barriers. We are in the middle of a social revolution which is changing society with astonishing and bewildering speed. It has become less and less possible for people to judge one another by their accents, clothes, incomes, the schools they went to, the decoration of their homes, where they live or what they possess. The same is true for their political and religious opinions. It *should* make meeting, real encounter between people, much easier—yet

the opposite is so often the case. Fear, aggression, even plain straight forward greed and envy have produced new divisions. The securities of the old structures are disappearing leaving nothing much to take their place. Perhaps it is just because we are the people we are that the Society of Saint Francis has at this point a vocation to provide common ground, a place of meeting, a boundary without barriers, where the suspicions can be seen for what they are, and a new freedom in love can be recognised. As an objective, that could appear naive and rather limited. Experience suggests however that its possibilities are enormous. Neither does it require sun and tea !—but love and a passionate belief in persons.

There will be another opportunity to gather for our London meeting in the Central Hall, Westminster, which falls on S. Francis' Day itself, 4 October. This year the preacher at the Eucharist will be Mother Elizabeth, and the principle speaker in the afternoon, our Tertiary, Caroline Cox. She is the Head of the Department of Sociology at the Northern Polytechnic (which has been much in the news of late), the wife of a psychotherapist, also a Tertiary, and the mother of three delightful children ! She is also, as a Christian, in the front line of a largely militant Marxist situation where, in a highly publicised way, the whole process of education has been challenged in the most aggressive manner possible. In fact a symptom of the sort of breakdown in society I mentioned earlier. When people so often say ' why doesn't the Church *say* something, or *do* something ? ' it is worthwhile recognising that it is both doing and saying, in highly professional terms in situations of this kind, and in the name of Christ. She is co-author of a book which will shortly appear describing in the bluntest terms just what happens when the principles of law, order and plain common sense are challenged by an articulate and unprincipled minority.

The house at Harbledown on the outskirts of Canterbury has been repaired, and we hope a small group of brothers will begin to occupy it later this year. We shall be grateful for your prayers for them, as well as for Angelo, who—with the closing of the Knightsbridge Friary—will be representing the S.S.F. in the Centro Ecumenico Nordico in Assisi, and Giles who will be joining Frans Eric and Ingmund in Sweden. If after the manner of S. Francis we thank God for the sun, it is certain that we should also add ' Praise God from whom all blessings flow ', including all those opportunities for witness, service and love.

Around the Province

Going North : Alnmouth Friary has been the scene of a number of movements over the past six months : Brother Denis in the style of our modern National Health Service was brought by air to Newcastle Airport and now has taken his place in the life of the Friary. The journey from the Dorset County Hospital (where he regained his mobility so well) did involve a long wait at Manchester, but Brother Denis still arrived in time to be wheeled from the car straight into the Chapel for Evensong : and we haven't looked back ! He celebrated Mass on 8 July, the first time for two years. Brother Juniper has also joined the Alnmouth family and he was warmly welcomed into their kitchen. Brother John Baptist had been giving some temporary support there and was quite a Godsend. Brother John Baptist, who has been with Brother Harold at Shepherds Law since last year, is expecting to return to the States at the end of the year. While in Britain, 'J.B.' has also been able to share in another side of the eremitical vocation with the Sisters of the Love of God at Bede House, near Maidstone.

Brother Liam also came to the North-East in May, after his time at Glasshampton. He received a warm welcome too as he claimed the unique place by being the one true Geordie member of the Friary !

London : Brother Mark, after a year with the brothers at Alnmouth, has returned to the South and is now based at Plaistow. The small family there—the list of Brothers is a bit misleading of the resident friar population !—has also been strengthened by temporary help from Brother Alwyn and later Brother Rufus, who in turn made good 'mates' for the 'works manager', Brother Christian, who had to delay his move to Cambridge in order to battle on with the structural work of Number 42 still to be completed.

... *And all stations West* : Brother Rufus arrives on 1 September at Hilfield where he will be Guestmaster. Another arrival at Hilfield, in August, was Brother Amos. He had left the quiet atmosphere of the Friary at Glasshampton in the early summer for a possibly even quieter month at Shepherds Law where he volunteered all his strength for the stone walls of the Hermitage ! Brother Amos will be taking over the land from Brother Hugh who has with a grand team in Dorset worked for a good harvest. Brother Hugh will be at the Plaistow Friary for the remainder of this year.

Brother Ruffino has come to join the family at Llanrhos, while Brother Marcus moved from Glasshampton and has given strength to the work in Birmingham. Brother Terry has gone over to Belfast for a term—being from South Africa himself, he might well recognise some of the undercurrents of a divided people.

The new team of novices at Glasshampton began their training there in July. These are Brothers David Douglas, Ninian and Christopher.

Brother Edgar, after three and a half years in Cambridge brings added strength to Glasshampton's witness of prayer and study, reflection and intercession.

Guardians at Alnmouth

As we have planned for some time, Brother Giles will be leaving Alnmouth in August and he will be joining the Brothers in Sweden as they set up their First Order life, probably in the Gothenberg Diocese. Chapter has elected Brother Derek as the new Guardian at Alnmouth and he will be arriving to take up his duties there at the same time. Brother Derek made his Profession in Life Vows at Hilfield Friary,

before the Bishop Protector on 28 July. He is well-known to the Newcastle Diocese where he has served as a parish priest. Welcome home !

Alnmouth Profession and Clothing

Brother Victor John (Filer) was clothed as a novice at Alnmouth on 25 July. There was a full chapel of friends and gate-crashers from the Northern Camp at Budle Bay who were able to share the occasion. On 3 August Brother Michael received the profession in simple vows of Brother Brian Thomas, making a second cause of joy and fellowship in the family within ten days.

Focus on the Noviciate

The Novice Conference : Brother Rufus writes : Had you visited any of our Houses between 9—13 June you could have been forgiven for thinking that our Society was a little short of members. But it really is alright !—it was just that all the novices and postulants (except Frans Eric and Ingmund in Sweden), both sisters and brothers, together with others from all over the Province who are involved with novice training, were all gathered together at Hilfield Friary to share, to celebrate, to explore, and to enjoy the many aspects of our family life. You could be forgiven too for not realising that this was only the second of such conferences (the first was in 1968) for everything went so smoothly. It was certainly a memorable time, with the wonderful atmosphere of praise, captured by Monday evening's opening Eucharist, which Brother Geoffrey celebrated, remaining with us throughout.

No time was wasted ; the three themes of community, prayer and mission came under much scrutiny, one topic being examined each day. Brother Michael linked each theme with a daily bible exposition and I think everyone found these remarkable and stimulating. Later in the morning, the ' Chairman for the Day ' gave us some personal insights into the day's topic and this led into our small discussion groups for the rest of the morning.

There were many opportunities for learning about the life of the Society in the other Provinces—with full and entertaining descriptions provided by Brother Henry on America, Brother Wayne on the Pacific, Brother James Anthony on Africa and Brother Giles on Sweden.

The flow of ideas was by no means one-way, and the ' forums ' where frank discussions and ' interesting ' questions were raised emphasised this particularly. Of course there was plenty of time too just to rejoice in being together, in fact for most of us I think these times were the most precious. The weather naturally was marvellous—which was just as well, with a dozen of us having to sleep under canvas ; on one particularly hot afternoon we took advantage of it and set off to walk to the neighbouring village of Leigh where we stopped for tea at the Vicarage, home of our tertiary brother, Harold Best. I thoroughly enjoyed our evening around the camp-fire which was so very good : we just sat and talked and sang and eventually even danced—such joy !

The ending of the Conference was begun on Friday morning with the final Eucharist which Brother Michael celebrated, but I don't think it has really ended yet—perhaps it will just carry on until the next one, which isn't too far away I hope. (Ed.: Agreed by Chapter to be in three years' time). Meanwhile many brothers are looking forward to a Conference in September at Hilfield entitled ' Communica-

ting the Gospel ' which will be attended by not only some novices but also professed brothers.

Novice Training : A person coming to test his vocation as a friar first joins the family as a postulant, where he can get the hang of the life from the inside without in fact being seen as a brown-habited brother. After these six months he is clothed as a novice and for a further year lives at one of the larger Friaries ; this at present is usually Hilfield though at times brothers have also begun at Alnmouth. Here the brothers receive some formal training, and lectures are provided and studies directed. Group work is encouraged, both for discussions and in prayer. After this initial period of about eighteen months, when some practical works are introduced—like going on a parish mission, or doing a term at Hooke or in a small Friary, etc., each brother spends about six months at Glasshampton where the life of prayer, study and manual work can be offered to God without distraction. Often the opportunity of Glasshampton provides a means of deepening one's relationship with God as well as gaining in self-awareness and growing in Christian love.

The second half of the noviciate usually provides some experience where deeper commitment is required, either in a smaller Friary or back with the larger groups of brothers, so that the fuller challenge of the Franciscan vocation is known and felt. Perhaps we over-commit our novices to the general commitment our Society makes in its various works and ministry ? None of us feel adequate or prepared for what we are asked to do ! In the end, we are little people, weak but trusting.

Novice Guardian : The last FRANCISCAN suggested that Brother Damian was to make a ' temporary ' move to Hilfield for the summer months. This seems to have confirmed a suspicion we had then that the time was ripe for the Novice Guardian once again to be based at the Friary where all the new brothers are living. Brother John Derek, as Novice Tutor for the Alnmouth Friary, has a particular care of the novices in the North-East, while Brother Alban as Guardian of Glasshampton is also Novice Tutor to those in his care. The tutors, together with Sister Teresa, Novice Guardian for the Community of S. Francis at Compton Durville and Brother Damian meet regularly for discussions and planning with Brother Michael, the Provincial Minister.

New arrivals at Hilfield

On 1 July, we welcomed Ian Leslie from Johannesburg and Reverend Peter Walker from Middlesbrough who have come to test their vocation. We are now looking forward to the arrivals this month of Richard Pope from Belfast and also Brian Anderson from Norwich.

Thank you for making it a habit

Many of our friends have been involved with the intricacies of our style of habits. Thank you all. Recently at Hilfield, Mary Dene has kindly been putting in weeks of overtime in the making of habits and in general tailoring work that constantly piles up. It is also a particular joy that she has recently begun testing her vocation in the Third Order.

Being Open

Brother Anselm writes from S. Francis School : We have picked up the sweet papers, we have marked out the running tracks, we have practised our songs, we

have prepared a great tea, we have washed behind the ears, we are ready for the day—for the inspection. Not, I hasten to add, that we are to be looked at by anyone so insignificant as inspectors—we are to be visited by the people who matter most to us, mums and dads, brothers and sisters, friends. The staff are wondering who will come, what faces from the past will appear, faces to arouse memory of days gone by (the memory sometimes sweeter than the event). It is Open Day.

At the time of writing, Open Day, 1975, is in the future—but a great many are behind us and we know that whatever weather he, in his infinite wisdom, decides on for the occasion, there is something quite indestructible about Open Day which to a considerable extent is independent of the weather (I hope not to have to regret those words). It is for us very much a great occasion, which we achieve (I believe) simply by being open. There are no speeches, there is a marquee on the lawn, the classrooms are open and teachers available—horror of horrors, parents see the boys' exercise books, there are games and lots of talk, there is a legendary tea. Anything special about 1975? Well, we are hoping very much to have Brother Geoffrey with us, and Brother Owen (who is not to be over excited!). We are also hoping to see many of you readers here to share the joys of the day—you will have found that one side effect of the expensive fire precautions now being installed is that the chapel of S. Mary of the Angels (whose dedication is celebrated every Open Day) now has an outside staircase which we shall use for the convenience of those who are to be present for the main event of the day, at noon.

Llanrhos

Brother Raphael writes: We are missing the youthful and unpredictable humour of Rufus and Juniper as well as their contribution to the devotional life here. Our loss is the gain of Hilfield and Alnmouth. John has joined us from the latter, ostensibly to retire, though there is little sign of it. His description of himself as 'adviser to the head gardener' simply means that he and Silyn work together. The blunt criticisms of an old hand are taken in good part by Silyn whose constant hard work over the last two years has produced an impressive crop of fine vegetables.

Gradually our involvement in the general life of the Church in Wales grows. Nathanael has the greatest contact with clergy and parishes up and down the country. He continues his hitch-hiking over quite large areas, going to conduct retreats, to preach and to speak. We have several contacts with schools, and with the universities at Aberystwyth and Bangor.

The Archbishop of Wales is kind to us and came to the house in May to license the priest-friars (Silyn and Raphael). Silyn continues his long-established pastoral ministry in many ways, including writing, and visiting parishes and colleges. Raphael conducted a retreat for clergy in the lovely setting of Llangasty Tal-y-Llyn near Brecon (where the Sisters of Charity run a retreat house), and preached at the Petertide ordination in Bangor Cathedral after conducting the ordinands' retreat.

Sister Gwenfryd Mary continues her art work, and is expecting to do a lot more work outside the house, particularly in counselling students. Ruffino is with us for a few months. Wales is already providing an inspiration for his oil paintings. Like all new arrivals, he soon discovered that a ten-minute climb to the summit of a nearby hill is rewarded with a glorious view: seascapes in several directions, the

river and fine castle at Conway, the Snowdonia range of mountains, and the north end of Anglesey with Puffin Island. This is an excellent spot for restoring serenity and a sense of proportion to the escapee from the tensions and demands of a small friary !

Brother Blackbird still shares our life, coming right into the kitchen for food for his family. His wife, not so sure of friars as he is, maintains a Welsh reserve. But she *did* let him bring junior into the kitchen recently for the proud presentation of what our scraps had helped them to produce.

We are aware sometimes of the strong spiritual tradition of the early christian centuries in Wales—still almost tangibly present in the stones of some of the holy spots. That age is recalled, too, in the syllable *Llan* (site of a church or religious cell) which prefixes most Welsh place names. May the Faith those stones 'remember' be lodged once more in the hearts of men. Pray that the Spirit might establish *us* in that Faith and help us to share it.

Clock-tower restored at Glasshampton

As one approaches Glasshampton from the Stourport road, the track rises sharply and the outline of the house comes into sight. It is now crowned in the centre by a white clock-tower, surmounted by a golden ball bearing a weather-vane with four gold points and a golden stag turning in the wind. At the time of writing, scaffolding is still in place, but it is hoped that by the time this is read the tower will be seen to better advantage.

The original clock-tower had to be dismantled several years ago as the timbers were unsafe, and although the wood for replacement was then obtained it has only now been possible to complete the job. The bulk of the work was done in a very short time between the departure of one group of novices on 7 June and the arrival of some more on 1 July. Two people only were living in the house and working on it for most of that time, one brother and one skilled tradesman.

The clock, made locally in 1813, has been partially installed and the hours have been striking gently from a new bell, obtained from a closed mission Church in Hertfordshire. It is hoped that some further aid may be forthcoming for the completion of this job as the clock could be put into good working order if the necessary sum was found.

Thanks from Birmingham

Brother Arnold writes : We should like to thank friends who have helped us along in many ways and given much encouragement. Support quietly grows in strength and there is a steady flow of visitors. To comment about the young men who make their home here would never be appropriate—except perhaps when there is news of a wedding, and as we hear also of weddings at Heathfield, I would commend to your prayers Tom and Carole who are preparing for their marriage in September. We look forward to seeing as many as possible for the Midlands Rally on Saturday, 25 October (see notice on page iv) and should the odd pair of curtains or some teatowels appear at that meeting, I know someone who would utter, 'but that's just what we wanted !'.

Commission on Mixed Marriages

Brother Barnabas attended the final meeting of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission on Mixed Marriages, held in Venice at the end of June, as one of the five-man Anglican team. The small Commission included representatives from England, Ireland, Canada and the United States, and was sponsored by the Roman Catholic Secretariat for Christian Unity and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Counsellors for Foreign Relations. A joint report has been produced, which it is hoped will lead to easing of the difficulties in marriages between Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

After the meeting Brother Barnabas stayed for a few days with the Franciscans at Fiesole, overlooking Florence, and visited Assisi and La Verna, and also the Abbey of San Miniato, where Brother Peter is buried in the monastic burial place. The lasting influence of Brother Peter's work in Italy was evident wherever he went, leaving a fund of goodwill for the Society of S. Francis, which is expressed in most generous hospitality.

Industrial Bridge

Industrial mission is always a particular emphasis at Liverpool, with many sides to it. In recent months a useful new venture has emerged, where regular working lunches are provided at the Friary for senior officials of the Trade Unions on Merseyside with leading industrial executives. Up to twenty have been brought together and appreciation is commonly expressed for the chance of informal dialogue on matters of mutual concern.

Apprentice courses are a familiar feature also, and as well as those at Nash Court in Shropshire, there are also others following on from these at Beckstones in the Furness area of the Lake District, and at Scargill in Yorkshire. In the adult field, the pattern has changed from speaker-based conferences to experience-based workshops for men from all levels of industry. David Stevens is always at these, and brothers sometimes go with him as well as the other industrial chaplains.

Inside Out

It is good to record that the long established links with Portland continue, and in June Brothers Ninian, Cuthbert and Dominic Christopher made a weekend visit to the Borstal. They returned with a group of six lads together with the Borstal Chaplain, Ray Guymer, who all did invaluable work about the Friary at a busy time of the year. Thanks lads, and keep up the letters which together with our prayers makes brotherhood.

Brother Michael made a weekend visit to Kingston prison where Brother Donald is part-time Chaplain. All the eighty or so prisoners are serving life sentences, and whether this is the reason or not, they certainly showed much appreciation for the concern and ministry of the brothers. Brother Damian made a visit later in the summer, and it is hoped that a series of weekend visits might be made in future.

Need for Community

Brother Jonathan writes: There have been the usual and indeed increasing numbers of guests and visitors to Hilfield Friary. This is especially true of the many

young people who find their way to us. It is interesting to observe that more and more people seem to need and be looking for peace and community. There has also been a substantial rise in the number of school groups visiting Hilfield from this area. The brothers are especially glad when they in turn can visit the schools and learn something of their way of life. It is this *sharing* that is so important a part of Franciscan life !

It does seem that many more people—parishes, confirmation groups, P.C.C's. and others want to come to the Friary for a day to be quiet, to pray, to listen, to share,—rather than just be tourists. This is a significant new development in the outgoing ministry of our Friary.

Kilimo-Cha Kufa Na Kuponu and The Seven Plagues !

Brother Basil writes : As you may have read in your newspapers Tanzania is broke ! For the last twelve months we have been surviving on foreign aid in a big way—which is against the general policy of the Government. The reasons for this were mainly the failure of both the short and the long term rains and the fact that last year the population was too busy moving or being moved into *Ujumaa* villages. (*Ujumaa* stems from the Swahili word *Jumaa*, meaning family.) A nationwide attempt is being made to consolidate the population into small villages, and in so doing reduce the cost of bringing water, electricity, etc. to the people.

This year the Government began pushing their new slogan which actually means 'Grow your own crops or starve'. Luckily the rains came after a long drought and record crops are reported for most of the Country. The new budget is just out : practically no imports at all—meaning big shortages ahead. Petrol is now the equivalent of about £1 a gallon.

But Mtoni goes on happily in spite of the apparent financial plight of the Country. The Friary has been novice-less for some time ! Petro, William and Barnaba are in the Masasi district doing evangelistic work under the watchful eye of Mama Fidea of the Community of S. Mary. Chamala, Benedict and Kenneth are getting to know their Bible at Morogoro. Wulfrum is doing book-keeping and typing courses in Dar : he had a bad accident on the motor bike earlier this year but has made a remarkable recovery. (They build them tough in Lindi !). Our postulants from the colder regions are settling in well and making an excellent third group in the family.

Meanwhile we have also through the year had a round of furloughs. Barnabas Joseph returned after a journey half way round the world, sporting a beautiful beard ! Basil too, with hair-raising stories of dodging Freedom Fighters and 'the ones that got away' on Lake Kariba. Desmond went off to Zambia for six months and Anthony to England via Greece.

We have had our share of plagues in the Friary this year ! In January it was millions of flies, in February it was cockroaches—until Bernie discovered a way of enticing them into a plastic trap. March brought the white ants once again into our mud houses. As they are still under guarantee to Rentokil, the company had to return to pump fifty gallons of evil-smelling poison into the floors. Then came the stink bugs and the mosquitoes, and in June billions of ticks of all sizes and descriptions. Our latest plague is rats, rats, rats everywhere. War is declared but the cats

proved a dead loss so we have taken to *man hunts*. A never ending problem in the tropics is dealing with snakes ! In Africa *all* snakes are treated as poisonous. We have killed about six grass snakes, two mambas, four cobras, three house snakes and one small python in the Chapel itself ! Chalama until recently was the champion, having learnt to hit them behind the head properly in Zaire. A complaint was made by the brother bursar recently that we were spending too much money on *broom handles* and therefore we have cut up all our spare bits of hosepipe, which being plastic and unbreakable make effective weapons. These are left in 'snakey' looking places until the cry '*nyoka*' breaks out. Then it's a mad rush to grab your bit of hose and surround the reptile. Life really is a lot of fun ! Anyone fancy coming to join us in Dar ? We really need a 'Pied Piper of Hamelin' !

Heathfield Intake

Since the last FRANCISCAN, the number of residents has returned to its accustomed size and now five young men are living at Heathfield. Brother Noel has been accepted for a course at Manchester Polytechnic for the Probation Service, and he is due to begin this in September.

Fiwila Hospital

Where is Fiwila ? Deep in the heart of central Zambia, in the Mkushi district, one hundred and ten miles from the town of Kabwe. Our Friary and the Hospital, known as the Fiwila Rural Health Centre is situated on the edge of a hill near a beautiful waterfall ; it is the stream that supplies all the water needed for the Health Centre, Leprosy Settlement and the adjoining schools. The Health Centre contains a forty bed unit and the Leprosy settlement numbers about eighty people.

Ten years ago the 'Hospital' consisted of a small outpatients' department and several huts. Now the latter have been replaced by wards built by Brother Stephen Lambert and Brother Aidan with their team of builders and carpenters. The Hospital, until recently run by Sister Clare and Tertiary Joan Gorringer, is now in the charge of Brother Simeon who arrived in May.

The U.S.P.G. Medical News bulletin continues to describe the scene : For an underdeveloped country Fiwila does not justify a resident doctor but there are weekly visits by the Flying Doctor Service. The U.S.P.G. children's appeal in 1971 helped to raise funds for the excellent new air strip. Advice can be obtained from the doctor through radio contact, and a few seriously ill are transferred by plane to the Central Hospital in the city of Ndola. The 'ambulance' service by plane is an ideal arrangement. The number of leprosy patients in the settlement is falling because of the well-developed outpatient supervision. Most of these outpatients are treated by injections through the mobile service undertaken by Mr. Jonathan Mutukashya, a medical assistant who has worked at Fiwila since 1928. He is also in charge of the settlement. It is hoped that Zambian medical assistants and nurses will be available to continue this work after next year.

Brother Tristram describes the events of one day :

Life at Fiwila can be boring. But not today. A young white man arrived at the hospital severely burnt after a petrol explosion. He had driven in, quite how amazed us, in a Land Rover from fifty kilometres away, where he had been hunting

elephant. He was drunk from Cane Spirit, the local rum. We discovered this evening that he is an epileptic on phenobarbitone. He had tried to light a beacon fire to attract three other members of his hunting party who had been missing for two days ; one was his sixty-three years old father. They had neither food nor water, nor any blankets for the bitterly cold African night.

We sent out a search party to try to look for them, but they returned an hour ago, having failed to even find the camp.

Mission Medic-Air, a volunteer organisation here in Zambia, hope to be able to carry out an air search tomorrow morning, and we will try again by road, but the latter is an euphemism. Whatever the outcome will be, it is in God's hands. The burns case keeps shouting ' Jesus Christ '. Let us pray his cry for help is heard.

Long Journeys

After a year with the Brothers in England, Chapter elected Brother Antonio Sato from Japan to membership in the Society. During the early summer Brother Antonio returned to Tokyo, where for a month he worked locally under Bishop Cudo. In July he returned to the Liverpool Friary where he has very happily settled.

All the Brothers in Liverpool are most sorry to have to say goodbye to a local Tertiary priest, Keith Lightfoot, Vicar of S. Anne's, Stanley, who moves in September to New Zealand, where he is to be Vicar of S. Luke's Church, Mount Albert, near Auckland ; a parish quite close to our Brothers at Glen Innes. Since our beginning in Liverpool Brothers have been received and welcomed at S. Anne's and some have been very active in the life of the Parish.

Northern Pilgrimage Revived

Not only has the Budle Bay Camp been graced with everlasting life, but this year sees a most welcome resurrection, that of the Northern Pilgrimage. Brother Keith, who has been connected with both events intimately, and providing he survives the running of the Budle Bay Camp in July, has, at the time of writing, a list of twenty Cambridge students for the Pilgrimage. The traditional route begins at Holy Island (Lindisfarne) and the pilgrims walk or bus-ride, sometimes chatting and sometimes silent, sometimes repeating the psalms of ascent, round the path of where S. Cuthbert's body was buried and hidden during the two hundred years or more between his death and its final resting place beyond the High Altar of Durham Cathedral.

City and Country

One of the joys of ' being available ' is sometimes to be able to offer hospitality to those working temporarily on local children's holiday play groups. Two ordinands stayed with the Brothers in the Shankill during the summer weeks, while on the other hand the Guesthouse at Hilfield has been a place of refuge for a number of individuals whose more permanent work is of this exacting kind, and where the country scene and the peaceful atmosphere make a good contrast to the city play-ground.

Up the Antrim Road

Brother Eric, attached to the Friary in Morpeth Street, has taken over as Officer in Charge of Williamson House, in the Antrim Road, Belfast, where he is running a home for children. The House is under the Social Service Department of the Royal

Victoria Hospital, and together with a staff of seven, they have the care of about twenty children aged between six and sixteen.

Third Order News

Brother Michael has recently visited Germany where he admitted four novices to the Third Order : three are priests of the Old Catholic Church and the fourth a lay member of that Church. We warmly welcome news of this further growth and sign of the ecumenical opportunity given to our Third Order. Crossing the International barriers, Brother Geoffrey has also recently admitted a group of novices in Singapore, consisting of five European, two Indians and a Chinese postulant. In Southern Africa there have recently sprung up mixed groups of black and white, both in Bulawayo and in Durban.

Fifty Years ago

We reprint an extract from *The Flowerette*, under the Editorial Notes by Brother de Winton :

‘ We are glad to say that one of our oldest and most useful brothers is taking up once more the work that he has been accustomed to during the greatest part of his life, as a butler, and we would venture to state, in the most advantageous circumstances it has been his lot to secure. We are deeply grateful to his most kind employer. We are also pleased to record another success on the part of a brother who has been here for three months and left on the 30th August to enter an important job in the adjoining county of Somerset and is also the same class of work that he has been previously in, viz. a clerk ’.

Ed.: It was Brother Kenneth who printed *The Flowerette*, the magazine of those early years of the Brotherhood. The work of Bernard House at Hilfield does very much continue in this Franciscan tradition.

Iona, Focus of Unity

Anne Anderson (Third Order) writes : For those who managed to come to the Franciscan Conference at Iona Abbey—Brothers Bruce, Edward, Ninian and Vincent with a ‘ mixed bag ’ of thirty Companions and Tertiaries from both sides of the Border and from Northern Ireland—it was an unforgettable experience.

First, of course, we had to get to know each other and we had to get to know the large ‘ family ’ into which we were welcomed ; the small group of resident members of the Iona Community, the much bigger number of young people living and working temporarily in the Abbey, and the folk in the nearby Youth Camp. We weren’t a private group *using* the Abbey for our own conference purposes. We had come to share in its life of daily worship, chores done together, fellowship and loving concern.

Mornings were given over to conferring. ‘ Reconciliation ’ was the theme for the very stimulating group discussions : Reconciliation seen in the life of Christ ; Reconciliation in the Church, in Community and in ourselves. Afternoons were free for exploring, for enjoying the sheer beauty and peace of the island and for absorbing something of the sense of being on holy ground. Brother Sun did well by us ! A gloriously fine week. In the evenings we gathered to learn about the purpose and concerns of the Iona Community and of its early beginnings in the slums of Clydebank during economic depression.

We shall not forget the hilarious Youth Camp Concert and the day of pilgrimage when we visited S. Columba's Bay and other landmarks associated with the early life of the Christian Church on the island. Still less can we forget the evening Service of Healing and the final act of our common life before we had to separate—the Abbey Eucharist on the last evening.

It was an experience—an encounter between two Communities which we hope is only a beginning, because we have much in common and much to learn from each other.

Nine Hundred Years at Salisbury

A bus took almost everybody in the Friary at Hilfield to Old Sarum to celebrate nine hundred years of Christian life at Salisbury. A great open-air service took place at which the preacher was the Archbishop of Canterbury. A special guest was the Bishop of The Sudan with whom the Salisbury Diocese has a special link. We had the joy of having the Bishop with us a week later at the Friary as our Guest.

Stigmata Festival

At the time of writing we are all looking forward at Hilfield to our Stigmata Festival on 13 September. With us will be the Bishop Protector, our preacher at the Eucharist, at which the Bishop of Ramsbury will preside.

Friary Reception

Harry Merritt, resident at Alnmouth Friary for about eight years after being widowed, is Secretary of the Companions in the Northumberland area. It was a great day on 12 July when he married Mrs. Evelyn Weatherill, and the reception was appropriately held at the Friary.

Sowing a Word in Season

Brother Wilfrid, who looks after the flower garden at Alnmouth, and who is never known to miss an opportunity, was recently invited to give a talk to the Whitley Bay Horticultural Society. Together with his 'sister' Olga from whom he is never parted (she is the Guide Dog !), he also spoke to the Sleekburn Women's Institute.

CATS AMONG THE ERMINE

News from Sweden

Brother Frans Eric writes : What should the first Franciscan presence within the Church of Sweden look like ? Where should this presence make itself felt ? What kind of a pattern of corporate and individual prayer would insure a proper spiritual direction and balance in the lives and work of the Brothers ? How could a real sense of identity, community and calling be maintained outside of an organised Friary ? . . . These were the kind of questions which Brother Ingmund and I were asking ourselves as we approached the end of our training at Glasshampton Monastery and began looking forward to our return to Sweden. Still, we knew that even the most thoughtful theoretical answers to these questions could not make anything happen, because no well-endowed benefactor would be waiting on the shore to

greet us with the wherewithal to establish ourselves. Sometimes, we comforted ourselves with the thought that even Francis had no answers to such questions when he first gathered his little band of brothers, but there was small comfort in this thought, for twentieth-century Sweden is obviously a very different place from thirteenth-century Italy, and as far as we know, the Church of Sweden, with its well managed system of taxation and church maintenance had long ago eliminated the possibility of any little abandoned churches where we might build a make-shift Friary as Francis did.

Our post-Easter trip to Sweden for the Swedish Third Order Conference at S. David's Retreat House was intended to be an opportunity for our first serious soundings with regard to a future foundation in Sweden. Ingmund, being a native of Gothenburg and my being a priest of that diocese, we began with our bishop who had given us his whole-hearted encouragement from the first when we made the decision to enter the noviciate of the Society of Saint Francis. We knew of course that our bishop, like all Swedish bishops, had no decisive say in the disposition of church property, funds or livings, and that in spite of his desire to help us, he must necessarily think first and foremost as shepherd to a very awkward flock, a substantial part of which is traditionally suspicious of all innovation, let alone such seemingly 'Romish' innovation as the restoration of religious life in community to the Lutheran Church. So it was with every kind of doubt and anxiety that we watched the bishop lift the telephone, ring up the *Kyrkonamd* (a local equivalent of the Church Commissioners) and cheerfully announce that he had some gratis manpower which needed only a roof over their heads and food for the day, and that he would send them over to explain themselves and their plans. Presumably, some unbelieving enquiry was made from the other end as to the nature of this manpower. The bishop replied, trying to sound casual about the whole thing, that he had two monks sitting with him in his library, after which reply came an extended series of silences, explanations and new explanations . . . 'yes . . . yes . . . monks . . . no . . . not Roman Catholic . . . Church of Sweden, one of them a priest from the diocese . . . yes, with habits, hoods and all the rest . . .'.

We went to the *Kyrkonamd* at the appointed time feeling more like Christians going into the arena than monks ready to make a new foundation. Somehow, I felt that Francis had a better chance with Pope Innocent than we had with the *Kyrkonamd*. The Commissioners had probably never seen a friar except in old Robin Hood films. How could they be expected to take us seriously? Undoubtedly, they had only agreed to meet us because the bishop had insisted. Nevertheless, on the appointed day, we made our way from one office to the next and from one group of gaping secretaries to the next until, to our own bewildered surprise, we found ourselves chatting informally to the commissioners about the life and work of our community. They wanted to hear about the garden at Hilfield, the school at Hooke, the hostel at Ashton-under-Lyne . . . they wanted to hear about the wayfarers, the long-term guests who 'live in', the retreats, the school groups, the university groups, the missions, the work in prisons, the hermitage and so on.

The sympathetic reception we got was a real relief, but all that came of it was a suggestion that we go over to the City Mission and introduce ourselves. 'Ah, yes' we thought, 'they are unwilling to get involved, and they want to pass us on to somebody else'. But the commissioners evidently put in a good word for us, for

after a brief interview with the director of the City Mission, the decision was all but made to put us in charge of a five-month experimental programme for alcoholic, psychiatric and other clients of the City Mission, who were willing to live with us for a time in an extended family setting, out in the countryside in a large villa which would be rented for the purpose by the City Mission.

The whole thing happened quite like a miracle. The director of the City Mission was scheduled to depart for an assignment in Ethiopia within a few days, and the funds had only just become available for this particular project. As yet, he had no personnel, and there are very few social workers, even within the Church, who want to be cooks, gardeners, work leaders, recreation leaders and who want to lead worship services in addition to doing counselling of clients living with them on a full-time basis. We see ourselves as Franciscan Brothers, rather than qualified social workers, of course, but the job description sounded like a 'revved up' version of Hilfield. It would have been unthinkable as a framework for a permanent foundation because the frantic pace could be anticipated to kill the soul if not the body, but it seemed a good way to begin testing out possibilities in Sweden.

In a matter of days we found ourselves on a beautiful island—Saro—(long since joined to the mainland by some swampy pasture) trying to get a dilapidated old summer mansion, with its immense though long neglected garden, into some kind of shape for our family-to-be of assorted clients from the City Mission. First we had to clean the big hulk of a house and furnish it. Fortunately, the City Mission always has a good supply of used furniture donated to it for re-sale. We soon grew to be quite at home in the crazy mixture of faded elegance and second-hand junk. We had inlaid ceramic stoves worth thousands, crystal chandeliers and lots of little rarities like King Gustav V's chamber pot (from the time when the King was the guest of Herr Wollmar Bostrom). At this point, I must hastily add, lest the reader draw the conclusion that our living in a Saro summer mansion among the better off people has led us to identify ourselves with the rich instead of the poor, that the lack of warm water, except in the kitchen, and the lack of either bath or shower served constantly to remind us that we hadn't really made it. We kept our food in a vegetable cellar behind the house and we had neither washing machine or car. You can't feel much like a millionaire when you're reduced to galvanised tubs and a scrubbing board and it takes about an hour to go to the parish church on foot.

The garden presented a real challenge. Most of it was completely overgrown with saplings and high weeds, but we were determined to have lots of flowers and to grow our own vegetables as well. Then, too, we needed areas for volley-ball, badminton, outdoor grilling, etc.

The City Mission's summer family comprised two girls in their early twenties, who had already gained one year of practical experience at the 'Alcohol Polyclinic', and an active laywoman with two young boys, in addition to ourselves. To our great joy we found our co-workers eager to join us for the office, intercessory prayer, corporate meditation and daily Mass. We converted the 'Blue Salon', which looked something like a gazebo hung onto one end of the house, into a chapel. We covered the fireplace and used the mantle-shelf for icons. We clothed a simple wooden table for our altar and made a lectern out of an old fir-stump.

The unity among us in spiritual things has probably been the chief blessing of the summer, for as we did not choose our co-workers we might well have found ourselves

working with some very secular types and have been forced to say our offices on the sly in some corner of the house where we would not get in anyone's way. I think one could say in all honesty that the Saro house, in spite of its intense activity, has been a house of prayer. Many people came to visit us, to participate in our worship and to ask our prayers, both from the surrounding parishes and from the city. Our colleagues at the City Mission always emphasise our prayer life when they tell others about our work, and although we feel that our poor prayers are far from what they should be, we are continually reminded by such requests for prayer that what we have to offer is not ourselves over anything we can do, but our God and our faith.

The inevitable question is always put to us sooner or later, of course, 'Do you get any therapeutic results—do they stop drinking—do they get better—do they go back to work?'. I am forced to dodge that question because we are only a part of the City Mission's therapeutic programme and an experimental part at that. Most of our guests live in the summer family for a couple of weeks only. We are quite convinced that they go back to the clinic healthier—the country air, the physical work, the recreation and the home-cooking insure that. The temptation to use drugs and alcohol is not very great in the country, and even this factor means a great deal. As to what effect life in a family-type fellowship has, I must say that it has meant much only to a small minority. With many, we fail to make any impression. Nonetheless, all our guests are confronted with Christians living and working together and they are encouraged to join in. Our witness is what is usually termed 'low pressure'. We make no attempt to get a decision for or against the faith as an answer to anyone's particular problems.

This policy has obvious limitations. It means that many of our guests are merely undergoing therapy in a Christian setting in order to qualify for the financial aid provided by the state for those undergoing treatment. Still, the City Mission apparently is convinced that the 'low pressure' method enables them to minister to a wider cross-section of people. We simply do our best to keep that pressure, however low it may be, constant enough to be felt. Brother Ingmund and I, found ourselves sometimes sharing one room with the dog and various guests, and as often as not I slept in a corner of the attic. If there was a silent meal, it was not planned; we knew that something was wrong—somebody was angry with somebody else, or that some of the guests were thinking about sneaking out for a drink. Still the fundamental monastic rhythm of work and prayer against the background of spontaneous brotherhood so characteristic of Franciscanism was, from the beginning, the framework which held everything together. Without that we would have found ourselves doing little more than running a boarding house.

As Franciscan Brothers, we are concerned about the therapeutic effect of the City Mission's summer family, of course, but the meaning of our witness is much broader than that. We think that we have something of a prophetic stance within the Swedish Church and even within Swedish society which is more important than any particular social-work we do. The typical Swede, even the typical church-going Swede, salves his conscience with the knowledge that his country has developed the most comprehensive welfare system in the world. Yet that system often cannot buy, beg or borrow people to do the kind of thing we are doing this summer, the kind of thing that the love of Christ ought to compel lots of Christians to do.

Now there is something about us, Franciscan Brothers living in our family of 'odd-bods' from the City Mission, living as we do among the very well-to-do who can afford to live out in the countryside, but living rather differently from them—there is something about us which says something. As the Swedish idiom puts it, 'we are like cats among the ermine', and this enables us to be like prophets without consciously trying. We are not rich, but then we are not poor either, for we are what we are by choice and we do what we do by choice. We do not quite fit into the Swedish conception of things, but the way in which we fail to fit says more about the pattern than it does about us, and that is surely the way all real prophecy speaks.

Brother Reginald writes :

PACIFIC PROVINCE Last time I wrote I hoped that this time I would give you more news of our work in PNG. But we shall be working out in detail during the next few weeks some of the changes which need to be made, so I ask you to pray for us as we make our plans. I really *do* expect to be able to say more about them next time. Brother Andrew is at present in Australia, taking part in a course in mental and cultural health. He returns to PNG at the end of this month and to some extent our planning for the future will depend on what medical work is available for him.

Since I last wrote 16 September has been fixed as the date for the declaration of the independence of PNG. The general opinion is that in the immediate future things will continue as they are. For some time now the country has been preparing for independence, so many changes have already taken place and more and more positions have been localized. The most recent change was the introduction of the new currency in April. The Australian dollar and cent have been replaced by the Kina and the toea. For the time being there is parity between the two currencies, but that may not be for long. The names 'kina' and 'toea' preserve the cultural traditions of the country, and referred originally to the shell money used in the Highlands and in coastal Papua respectively.

Brother John Charles arrived at Brookfield soon after Easter to take up his duties as guardian of the friary. Because of the changes which had taken place earlier in the year the household to which he came was largely new, and he had to work out with the brothers a new approach to the life and work of the friary. It is no longer economically viable, financially or in the use of the brothers' time, to use the land attached to the friary for dairy cattle to supply ourselves with milk. The land will be let out for agistment and we shall no longer run a farm. We believe that the ministry to guests is an important part of our work, and what-

ever changes may be made in the near future we want still to give accommodation to a number of men referred to us by the social welfare departments. It has been good to have George back at Brookfield since he returned in March from his time with the Bush Brotherhoods at Quilpie and Bourke. At present he is visiting his family in Canada, and we look forward to having him back as part of the friary family in October. A joyful occasion which brought many friends to Brookfield was the life profession of Brother Ross. The Archbishop of Brisbane received his vows on behalf of the Provincial Protector on 23 May. Ross is the first New Zealand brother to take life vows in our Society.

After a long and painful illness Brother John Shaw died on 5 June. He would have completed his noviciate in September, but Brother Francis received his vows in hospital a few days before he died. We thank God for Shaw. He was a sick man for the greater part of his three years at Brookfield, but he gave a lot to us and to many others through his simple faith and great courage, and we rejoice that he died a professed brother of our Society.

At the end of May I went to stay for a few weeks with our brothers in New Zealand. The four brothers at Glen Innes have been together only since the end of March. Our New Zealand work has had a number of setbacks through illness, but I hope that Rodney and his present team will be able to stay together for some time and build solidly on the work which William and others began. As well as the ministry in the parish of Glen Innes the brothers are increasingly involved in the life of the local community through the Citizens' Advice Bureau, the secondary school and the Glendowie Community Centre, and in the near future Rodney is due to conduct a retreat in Wellington and a mission at Tauranga. While I was in Auckland Brother Donald Andrew made his simple profession at S. Mary's, Glen Innes, and many friends shared the celebration in the church and in the house.

The Third Order is growing steadily in this province. I conducted a retreat for the New Zealand tertiaries at Wallis House, Lower Hutt, in June. After the retreat history was made by the first meeting of the N.Z. Regional Chapter. The Australian Regional Chapter has recently been formed, but distances are such that the first meeting will be difficult to arrange. I hope, however, that early next year representatives of both Chapters will be able to meet as a Provincial Chapter (and this, again, would be the first meeting). It is good that both in Christchurch and in North Queensland (in the Cairns area) groups of

tertiaries are being formed and I am happy to have visited both these groups in the last few weeks. Please pray that as they grow in numbers our Pacific tertiaryes may give a strong and prayerful Franciscan witness to Christ in the places where they live and work.

Cause for great joy and thanksgiving is the arrival of the Sisters of the Community of Saint Clare in Australia. Three sisters arrived at Stroud in New South Wales on 19 May (another is expected later) and Brother John Charles, as their warden, was there to greet them. The people of the area, and of the Newcastle diocese, have given the sisters a warm welcome. They have shown great interest in them and have done a lot to help them in setting up their new home. They understand, I think, that once the sisters have established their enclosure, on S. Clare's Day in August, they will not see them about the town, but it is important that good relations have been established and that the people know something of the vocation of the Clares and of the ministry of prayer to which they have been called in this province. Praise God that they are here !

There are many things in this letter for you to pray about. Please continue to pray for us all in the Pacific, especially for vocations to our Society. There are so many opportunities here. If only we had more brothers we might rise to them, but, spread over four countries, we are few. I have said nothing of the Solomons so far, but I shall be there in September. Randolph has recently gone from Koke to join the brothers in Honiara, and Colin will soon be going there too. A sad blow for the Church of Melanesia was the death of John Chisholm, but four months Archbishop of the newly formed Province. Archbishop John knew that before long it would be right for the leadership of the Province to be in the hands of a Melanesian and he was working towards this end. None knew how soon that change would come, and we are happy that Norman Palmer, the Dean of Honiara, has been elected Archbishop. His consecration will be on All Saints' Day. It was a privilege to be with Archbishop John just two weeks after Easter when he learned of the very serious nature of his illness. He relaxed in a remarkable way and before his death he gave to the church in Melanesia and to his friends in many places a strong message of hope and joy for the future. 'Christ is Risen', he wrote, 'so there is nothing to fear'.

On my way to the First Order Chapter at Little Portion Friary in the States, I shall be in England—only briefly, from 11 to 31 October—but I do hope to see some of you again. May God bless you all.

What Did You Say, Brother Francis?

Preached by the Right Reverend Eric Mercer, Bishop of Exeter at the celebration of the seven hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Stigmata of S. Francis, in Sherborne Abbey in September, 1974.

FROM time to time, one of our church newspapers (I can't remember which one it is—but it's not the *Church of England Newspaper*—so I think it must be the other one) carries a feature in the form of an interview between some notable person and a staff journalist. I have before me (God forgive me!) the advanced text of such an interview between the journalist, a Mr. Sago, and Brother Francis—who, it might surprise you to know, is alive and well and living in an abandoned nissen hut next door to Pontlins Holiday Camp near Pwllheli in the Isle of Wight. I propose to read you the text of that interview.

Sago : Brother Francis, you live here in isolation and simplicity. Most of our readers live in a complex and technologically sophisticated society. You, in your frugality, seem to find peace and sufficiency. They in their affluence seem to find nothing but apprehension and bewilderment. Have you anything to say to them?

Francis : You make it all sound so dramatic—and really—it's not like that at all. Listen. *Where there is charity and wisdom—there is neither fear nor ignorance.* It is not necessarily the *setting* which turns a man to good or to bad. It is, as you would say, his motivation. If a man is turned in on himself he won't understand what life is about—and he will walk uncertainly—each step hedged by fear. If a man has been turned inside out by the love of the good Lord Christ, then he'll know what he is about and, whether he's in a hermitage or at the heart of the rat-race, he'll walk with certainty and boldness.

Sago : Let me press you on this one. My readers will say—it's all very well for *you*. They have to live in an atmosphere of strife and disharmony, contention, anger, violence. The workers are against the management—the haves are against the have-nots—the young are against the old—the right against the left . . .

Francis : Forgive me for interrupting—but you have not taken the point. You talk as though a man's environment conditions him totally. The Lord Christ thought differently. I tell you—*where there is patience and humility there is neither anger nor vexation.* Now—that's not just a smug dictum. Look at it this way. If ever there was a violent action, it was the Crucifixion of our dear Lord. They whipped him and beat him. They drove nails into his limbs and pierced his precious body with a spear. But—his wilful readiness to bear the outrage—the fact that he submitted without protest to the indignity of it all—transformed that negative occasion of horror into one which gives healing and wholeness. Let the Christian man take the same patient humble Lord Jesus Christ into the discords of life. Let the same Christian man share the patience and humility of his Lord. Where there is patience and humility—anger and strife cannot long remain on top.

Sago : Brother Francis, has it always been as it is now? Almost as an accolade we have the title 'the acquisitive society'. Produce more—have more—get more. To have is to succeed. The pressure is on everybody to be on the make. Has this always been the way of things?

Francis : Do you really ask me that ? Dear Lord—will they never learn ? Adam was on the make, from the moment of the monkey-business in Eden. That is how man is—if he goes his own way. And that is how he will be so long as he chooses not to identify with the second Adam. But—you want it positively. Right ! *Where there is poverty with joy there is neither greed nor avarice.* Poverty with joy. There's no joy in *having* to be on the bread-line. But to *choose* the way of simplicity and ordinariness—that's another thing. You see it all in the second Adam, Jesus Christ our Lord. To choose the womb of the Virgin—to choose to drain himself of his omniscience and become one of us—to choose a shed in the backyard of a Bethlehem pub—to choose to be obedient to the disciplines of a peasant life—to choose to have nowhere to lay his head—to choose to set his face towards Jerusalem and for the joy that was set before him to endure the Cross. There you have it. 'Acquisitive society'—did you say ? Dear, sweet Lord—what an ugly phrase. Look ! Grabbing and taking makes for discontent. To choose to live the simple life rather than the soft life—that is the way to begin to know the joy of living.

Sago : One of the strange paradoxes of twentieth Century life is the evidence of stress and tension in the lives of so many people. So many of the rough edges of living have been eroded. Things *ought* to be so much easier. And yet more and more people seem to be unable to cope with the rough and tumble of daily decision-making. The chronic anxiety-state is manifest throughout our society. Is there anything you would like to say about this ?

Francis : Not much ! What do you think I am—some sort of guru ? But the greatest of all teachers has plenty to say which is to the point. So much to do in so short a time. Yet he took himself off into a desert place to be in peace with his Father. Even when he had braced himself for the Cross—he could pull out for a night of prayer and meditation in Gethsemane. *Where there is peace and meditation—there is neither anxiety nor doubt.* That sounds slick, I know. But it's true. The more the pressure—the more is there need for the disciplined life of apartness—waiting on the will of the Lord. The more the tension—the greater the need to surrender oneself to the peace of God which passes man's understanding. That's the way it is.

Sago : You will know, Francis, that we call ourselves also 'the permissive society'. There don't seem to be rules anymore. Even in the Church there seem to be those who think that anything goes. Now—somebody once said of you that you 'had the temperament of an artist and a poet and had little taste for rules and regulations'. Would you like to comment on the contemporary scene ?

Francis : You might have completed the quotation—'Francis had little taste for rules and regulations—wishing only to follow Christ simply and sincerely in the spirit of the Gospels'. You see, I read my press notices ! Of course there must be rules. And even the permissive society has its rules. The trouble seems to me to be that society doesn't ask itself any more—is this good ?—is this right ?—is this bad ?—is this wrong ? Oh no. Instead—men ask different questions. Does it work ? How much does it cost ? Is everybody else doing it ? And if those are the only questions which matter to a man no wonder that evil comes in. I believe that a healthy respect for the things of God makes for fullness and joy. Our blessed Lord gave us the guidelines of living—not to stop us from enjoying life—but to set us free to live life. This is why I have always tried to lead my brothers to follow

Christ simply and sincerely in the spirit of the Gospels. *Where the fear of the Lord stands guard there the enemy finds no entry.*

Sago : One last question, Brother Francis. I mentioned the permissive society. There are those who say that the pendulum has swung to its limit and that there will be a sort of moral backlash—that the only hope for society is a return to an almost puritanical approach to living. Do you think that such a backlash must come ?

Francis : No. And if it were to come it would be a sad day. I once said, somewhere, something like '*Where there is mercy with moderation—there is neither indulgence nor harshness*'. And I stand by that. The materialist *abuses* the things of this world. The puritan *refuses* them. The incarnate son of God *used* them and made them valid. I believe that your generation is beginning to see the good things of life in their true validity. It isn't only greed which is prompting men to become conservationists. It is, perhaps, an eleventh hour recognition of the fact that the material world, in its fullest sense, mediates the eternal and the spiritual. If that is true—you have no need to go panicking off into a puritanical backlash. *Use* the things of God—rightly and gratefully. I see hope for you yet.

Book Review

Guild of Health Pamphlets

What can one say about pamphlets ? They are admirable for those who find them so.

Here we have eight, dealing respectively with :—

Good News, Salvation and Healing.

Victory through Suffering.

Two Approaches to Healing.

Living with your Conscience.

Visiting Sick People.

Conquering Fear.

The Importance of Listening.

They are all obtainable, mostly at 8p each, from The Guild of Health, Edward Wilson House, 26 Queen Anne Street, London W1M 9LB.

They are all sensible little books, and especially valuable in a practical way is *Visiting Sick People*. Those with a pastoral ministry and an open mind would certainly find useful guidance, and this also applies particularly to

The Importance of Listening by Joan Searle. When reading this, (and especially having also just read *Living with your Conscience*) I was stricken several times by my own conscience. Listening is desperately hard work, and most of us do it very badly. Those who have had a Samaritan training know how vital it is to listen attentively, patiently, non-judgmentally and genuinely, and when it comes to the point how often do we find ourselves lapsing into a day-dream or making mental calculations of how soon we can decently break it off. Worse still is one's impulse to produce a plausible solution to the problem before the subject has really been fully opened up. Again for those in pastoral situations this is a valuable little textbook.

COMPTON DURVILLE.

SISTER GABRIEL C.S.F.

An Allegory: In the Name of . . .



EACH and every interpretation of Hamlet is at once the same and different. The lines do not alter but the interpretation of them does. Every actor who attempts the part has the problem of looking for the Hamlet that Shakespeare wrote, and presenting him in a way the audience can understand. Let's look at these two problems.

The Hamlet that Shakespeare wrote

There it is down on paper, some few thousand words. Words he spoke and words other people spoke about him. Set in a context and a time, of which he is inextricably a part. Simple, one might well be tempted to say. It's all there ; all one needs to do, is do it. So why so many Hamlets and why none of them the same ? The truth of the matter is, that there is only one Hamlet ; he is there, on paper. The Ideal. Shakespeare's creation. We can see him, or at least we think we can. Of course what we really see is an image of him, like the ray one sees from one angle of a diamond. It is the truth, but only a fraction of the truth, and the deeper we read, the more angles we see, until we're blinded by the infinite variety of angles, the intensity of light. It is as though seeing too many aspects of the truth blinds us to the whole, which of course it does. The only way we can begin to see the whole is by taking one angle and going to the heart if we can. So I take one angle, you take another and so on until we realize we have all taken our own and they are all different.

If we have really caught a ray of light and stay with it until the end we finally see what everyone else has seen who have followed their chosen angles to the end. We can all finally agree that what we see is the same, and yet in interpreting it we are still all different. It is inevitable that coming from the outside to reach the heart, we show our angle of the story. There can only be one who shows us all the angles ; that is the original diamond ; in this case the original Hamlet, Shakespeare's Hamlet, who is wholly and totally in Shakespeare, and that is the only place where he can be found in totality.

Hence the primary importance of studying the play first to try and hear what Shakespeare has to say of him, then maybe to study Shakespeare in a wider context to gain further insights and finally to have recourse to other people's opinions, if the need has to arise. Let

us never be fooled however into thinking that these other things are essential. They are not. They are only secondary aids. Always first the text 'Hamlet', always last the text 'Hamlet' and always all the way through, must it be allowed to permeate our insight. That is, if we truly want to show 'Shakespeare's' Hamlet. Not such an easy task now as it seemed at first. But devotion is not easy, it is all-consuming if we want the truth, our truth of the matter.

So far we have merely tried to attune ourselves, so that we may hear the truth. Now we are going to attempt to give it utterance. When we feel that we have heard, we want to see if we can give the vision shape and form. But whose shape and form—Hamlet's? What fools we are if we think we can do that. For we have already realised that we are not and never can be 'Shakespeare's' Hamlet. Shakespeare has already given us him. So why do we even want to attempt to create our version of him? Because Shakespeare wants us to? Because there were and are, and hopefully always will be actors and Shakespeare wrote, amongst many other parts, the part of Hamlet just for the delight of the actors being able to play him? Because Shakespeare had something he wanted to tell us and Hamlet in the hand of actors seemed the best way? Because having become fascinated by this character we wish to explore him more thoroughly by trying to play him? Because we want to be him? Because via him we want to tell people something of ourselves? and so on. Well we have our reasons, that is for sure, but for an actor one of the answers must always be because we want to be him and because we believe we can be him, if we try hard enough. The fact that we can't actually be him doesn't really matter. What matters is that we want to touch him, we want to be touched by him. We will hopefully know our final shortcomings, the audience will hopefully appreciate our performance and Shakespeare will hopefully be pleased and delighted at our attempt. It is the belief and the hope that is enough for us and because we have fallen in love with what we see and hear of the ideal. And it is because of this love that we want to show him in a way the audience can understand.

In a way the audience can understand

To present Hamlet as Shakespeare would have seen him originally, would mean re-creating the Globe Theatre, the Elizabethan audience,

the accent of the day, the clothes and movements of the period, and all the other things that would be needed in order to remake Elizabethan England. In its way this would be interesting and could well go towards illuminating some aspects of the text that we may find baffling in more modern style productions, but the overall effect would be practically incomprehensible to a modern audience. Hamlet would appear as an interesting historical figure, with only dim relevance to today. But the theatre is of now not of yesteryear, and if Hamlet speaks to us we must see if he is capable of being alive now. This means that however we present our story it must strike us as completely possible. We must be able to believe. I believe in parallels and it is in finding the correct parallel for today that we will succeed in helping the audience to understand. It doesn't matter what parallel one uses providing it strikes one as true and as universal to the audience, for whom it is intended, as well as to oneself. I may see and appreciate the truth in the aspect of Hamlet being a student at a University. It may strike a directly parallel line with my own experiences at University. This might be the right angle to work from and along. Will the audience see it too? Or can I see it so clearly that I feel I know the audience must be able to see my vision? Perhaps I have seen someone else's vision of Hamlet or heard of their vision of the part and it has excited me. Then in studying and searching I may have agreed more and more with them, but there will be differences in some aspects of interpretation and these I must make my own, because that is how I truthfully see it. I may begin to see Hamlet through another's eyes, such as the King's. Perhaps I should explore the play from the angle of Kingship, but where is the relevance of that angle for today? If I find it, if it burns into 'obviousness' in my brain, then I must follow this path. And so on and so on. But in a way the audience can understand. We are servants first and foremost of the author. He has a message that he wishes us to spread abroad. This makes us in turn servants of our audience, so that the message can be understood and transmitted. We are back full circle. In order to transmit what we have heard and seen we need to be able to hear and know our audience. Our audience lives today, they are our fellow men, women and children. We need to be part of them and apart from them, we need now to be able to hear and see and then to select. We need to select what are the common denominators of our times in order to make parables that can be understood. The parable is the way in which we tell the story. The truth is both sides of the story. Our way of transmission is via

stillness and vision, via sight and sound, via listening and speaking, via watching and praying.

So may we watch and pray for the right action—in the name of . . .

LONDON.

PAUL ALEXANDER (T.O.S.S.F.),
Actor.

The Living Theatre



WHEN I was asked to direct John Kerr's *Mistress of Novices* I wondered what appeal a play set entirely in a convent would have for the general public—its setting would be foreign to most people, and its story content, although factual, would be new to a great many, and

perhaps difficult to accept—?

The play is a reconstruction of the life of Bernadette Soubirous some years after the visions at Lourdes when she was a member of a community at Nevers, and it told of her years of trial and physical suffering at the hands of the Mistress of Novices at the convent of S. Gildard. Mother Marie-Therese Vazou was a deeply devout woman who was unable to understand why the visions of Our Lady had been vouchsafed to a peasant girl and not to herself who craved above all else to see the Blessed Mother of God. Her spiritual jealousy, coupled with her nagging disbelief in the girl's story, slowly crippled her mind and served to increase the mental and physical suffering of Bernadette until the death of the visionary in 1878. For another twenty-eight years Mother Marie-Therese was to endure her own spiritual agony, and only on her death-bed was she reconciled to the happenings at Lourdes, when she begged the intercession of Our Lady for her years of disbelief and for the torment she had forced Bernadette to suffer—never realizing that she herself would be one of the chief causes for the canonization of the saint which was foretold by the Vision, 'I cannot make you happy in this world, but I promise to do so in the next'.

We had a very ecumenical cast of 'Nuns'—Rita Tushingham, who played 'Bernadette' with such conviction, is a practising Spiritualist, Margaretta Scott, the 'Mother Superior', is a Catholic, and Barbara Jefford, 'Mother Marie-Therese', is a Non-Conformist. Among the

'Sisters' in the play, two were Jewish—and none were more fervent in the Hail Marys than these were ! The author himself was brought up as a Methodist, but as a young boy he had spent some time in a convent in the Congo where he first learnt the story of Bernadette, which was to stay with him until, after a visit to Lourdes, he felt ready to write a play about her.

We needed a background of Sisters to sing the Office, but all the Roman convents we asked to help us with a recording were now singing in English, and we needed the Latin Office as it was sung when Bernadette was in Nevers. At last we heard of a convent where Latin was still used—an Anglican one ! We took a recording van down to the convent in Edgware and they sung their hearts out for us, asking only that they might have a copy of the recording 'to hear what we really sound like'. Though the sincerity of their singing was perhaps stronger than their talent, it was one of the most successful contributions to a very moving production.

But the greatest contribution of all was the reaction of the audiences, many of whom had never heard of Bernadette nor Lourdes—certainly not of Nevers—and yet 'felt better' for the play. Many came to see it more than once, truly revived, I believe, by the experience of finding themselves part of lives so different from their own. They had been part of the Living Theatre—and that is what this article is about . . .

When one mentions the Living Theatre, one immediately asks oneself why one has said 'Living' ? And the answer is in its opposite, the Mechanical Theatre—Cinema and Television. The Living Theatre is Alive—of the moment—something that can never happen again—something that, however contained in shape and substance, that is never the same. Something that has an identity of its own yet changes every day. Its meaning seldom repeats itself, and its quality is rarely static. How often one hears, 'I enjoyed the play so much more the first time I saw it', or 'It meant so much more to me the second time'. I have even heard people say, 'I don't remember that scene the last time—they must have put it in since'—although it is practically certain that no changes have been made, but the content has impressed itself differently. Sometimes the personality of the leading actor may be more vivid and therefore more able to communicate—at others, a smaller part player may grow in stature for the same reason. Personality in an actor—the outlet for his inspiration—is seldom of a constant strength, although it is an actor's job to try and keep it so. This is a

matter for technique, and an actor who is proficient will appear to be giving the same performance and the play may appear to be the same, yet its impact will never be quite as it was the night before, for better or for worse.

In the Mechanical Theatre only one performance is recorded, and this remains for all time on tape or film, but the magic—the uncertainty—of the Live Theatre is absent. Magic and uncertainty—the two words go side by side. All magic is uncertain in its workings, because magic is human in spite of any mystical interpretations with which, in our ignorance, we may endow it. We accept the word as an acknowledgement that ‘there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy’.

In all magic rites a ritual is necessary, and the Living Theatre is one of the centres of ritual—there is an orderliness, a concentration of ideas, a progress of information, and a deep discipline. The Theatre, as we know, evolved from religious rites, and it is hard to tell where one fused with the other. Each used, and uses, ritual to explain an inner meaning, but not necessarily a simple explanation—often it is one in which symbols are used, but the truth of the message being too complex for our immediate acceptance. But until understanding comes we are helped on our way by ritual. Like other parts of the Living Theatre, ritual is never static—its paces may be shorter or longer, its audibility may be stronger or weaker, its music may be muted or full.

It is well to remember that the Living Theatre, as well as a living religion, needs an audience. One part cannot exist without the other. It is a give-and-take. Actors have become the priests in their celebration, but without a congregation they are without life.

One of the greatest forces to infect an audience is sincerity, the ability to concentrate on the truth, however banal or sublime. Sincerity knows no class barriers nor discrimination of any kind and overrides many deficiencies. After many years I am still overwhelmed by the memory of John Geilgud's *Hamlet*, and only lately, in New York, by Colleen Dewhurst in O'Neill's *Moon for the Misbegotten*—as well as by a performance I once saw of *Maria Martin* played by an obscure fit-up company somewhere on the Essex marshes, and a small touring company playing in Afrikaans in a church hall in a suburb of Johannesburg. They all believed passionately what they were telling

us, and so made us believe as well. Yet, had I seen these performances a second time, who knows what my reactions might have been ! But they were *alive*, and their message was for this moment. That I was able to receive it I am grateful—and refreshed, because refreshment is one of the greatest strengths of the Living Theatre. All entertainment is refreshment, and this may be obtained from the wildest of farces to the starkest of tragedies. It is to be part of another world, to be able to participate in other lives, to realize that one's own world is only a facet of the whole.

For a short while to be involved in other lives—to experience feelings that may have seemed alien to us—to expand—to be fuller of knowledge—to take a forward step, no longer in the dark . . . All art is enlightenment and the Living Theatre one of the brightest lights that shines. But the lighting of this torch is often taken for granted and the torch-bearer accepted too easily. Acting is no simple matter, and rehearsals are often times of struggle. For the first few days an actor will be completely outside the character he is going to play—there will be flashes of truth but these are quickly obscured while he is learning the author's words and fitting the new personality he will be assuming. Half-way through rehearsals is the most difficult time, the period when the actor transfers his own personality to the part he is playing—the time when his new self must begin to walk. During these few days it is well for the director to treat his actors gently, understanding the psychic stress that is taking place.

Sometimes it is not only the learning of ordinary words with which the actor has to contend—it may be the learning of foreign words. In *The Dame of Sark* which I directed lately, Tony Britton plays the German Kommandant of Sark during the Occupation, and when we started work on the play he could speak no German, which was necessary, and was uncertain of a genuine broken-German accent. But slowly as we rehearsed the German was perfected and the accent became as impeccable as his performance, which has grown in stature with each performance since we opened. This growth in understanding can only come from a number of consecutive performances of a part, and this is only possible in the Living Theatre.

Celia Johnson, too, who played the title role (lately followed by Anna Neagle), had to contend with a limp right through the play. The Dame of Sark herself had been crippled as a child and we decided that to omit this truth would lessen the impact of the character. Walking with

even a simulated limp can be extremely tiring, but Celia never shirked it from the very start of rehearsals. Both she and Tony Britton had hoped to meet Dame Sibyl Hatherway, but I was the only member of the company fortunate enough to do so—the week before she died at the age of ninety. At least I was able to return from Sark with firsthand knowledge of the Dame and bring the company into contact with all I had heard from her about the German Occupation of the island. She allowed me to take pictures of her drawing-room where the play is set, and Anthony Holland followed these implicitly in his stage design. Our room is a copy of the room on Sark, and to the best of our abilities the characters which occupy it each night are as truthful as the setting.

I believe that the Living Theatre can bring joy and enlightenment and stimulation which is unobtainable in any mechanized form. It is the completion of the circle—the participation of actor and audience—the plus and the minus—the priest and the congregation—The Whole.

LONDON.

CHARLES HICKMAN,
Theatre Director.

The Arts in Worship



THE graceful grey-haired lady approaches one of the Fisherfolk. Her eyes are sparkling with youthful excitement. 'I've always wanted to dance', she exclaims, 'but I was never free to try it before. Thank you for giving us the opportunity!'

'I wrote this poem several months ago. I've never shown it to anyone', the awkward teenager begins, 'will you read it and tell me if it's good?'

'The children have never been so attentive as they were during your dramatic reading of the story of Daniel', says a young mum after the Sunday morning family service.

The unlocking of new expressions of worship, the sharing of talents hidden under bushels, the involvement of children in worship are some of the fruits of the Fisherfolk's use of the arts in their ministry. They are the result of an evolution of ideas and expressions which began in

the Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas. As some of the Fisherfolk worked together in their church's coffee-bar ministry to young people, they realised that most of their clientele had turned a deaf ear to traditional expressions of the Gospel. A common thought emerged : their presentation of the Gospel needed to be every bit as vibrant, compelling, dramatic, and imaginative as the presentations TV and films offered their audiences. In their desire to communicate in this way, the Fisherfolk offered the talents they had—in music, drama, writing, dance, and the graphic arts. The Lord took their offerings, as he took the loaves and fishes of one small boy and multiplied them to feed thousands. New folk music began to emerge, drama and poetry began to express some of the dilemmas and the obstacles to faith and their experiences of the Lord's faithfulness. Dance became a way to express the joy and thanksgiving that welled up within them as they grew in love for the Lord and for each other.

Soon many of the young people who had encountered the lively faith of the Fisherfolk in the coffee-bar began to frequent their regular church services. The expressions familiar to them began to be tastefully integrated into the normal worship life of the congregation. The whole church found such expression brought a new element of freedom and spontaneity within the traditional structures. A simple folk dance could gracefully express thanksgiving at the close of the eucharist, a poem amplify a scripture reading, a peaceful guitar song lead a worshipful meditation during the communion.

When the Fisherfolk and others of their church in Houston were invited to live in England to share their experience of renewal, part of their ' baggage ' was their common experience of a successful use of the arts in worship. As they travel to parishes, conferences, and festivals of the arts in worship, they present a vision of vital and alive worship. Their chief aim is not to perform, nor to teach expertise in the arts. Rather, they act as a catalyst. They draw from individuals their (perhaps) hidden talents and then draw individuals together to express their faith.

At the heart of the vision they present is the picture of worship which we receive in the Old Testament, vividly described in Psalm 150 : ' Praise the Lord with trumpet, psaltery, harp, with timbrel and dance, with stringed instruments and organs, with loud cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord ! '. Certainly a picture of wholehearted praise calling forth everything from the worshippers !

Paul speaks from the same vision as he exhorts the Romans (Romans 12 : 1) to 'present your *bodies* as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship'. For Paul, worship was not an isolated activity reserved for a special place and a special time ; it encompassed the whole of life. Therefore, when God's people gathered together to offer praise and thanksgiving, they offered all they were. They presented not only their minds, word, and prayers, but also their *bodies*—their hands and feet, their emotions and imaginations. The result was an intense experience of which much present-day worship seems but a pale reflection.

Why is it that our worship is drained of this intensity ? One answer may lie in our tendency to consider some aspects of our humanity as less than 'holy'. We have experienced them as unruly, and so leave them outside like disruptive children when we go to church. As a result, they remain troublesome, virtually untouched and unchanged by our devotion. They are more easily touched and affected by the voices and suggestions of other masters. And our worship remains pallid and unenthusiastic.

The experience of the Fisherfolk has been that when we bring all the facets of our humanity into worship, we experience a new 'whole-i-ness'—an integration of our minds and bodies, our thoughts and feelings. We are able to offer the wholehearted praise of the psalms.

The Fisherfolk hope not only to share this vision of worship, but also to enable a congregation to experience its power. One of the ways they accomplish this in parishes, conferences, and festivals of praise is through workshops—small groups working together in the areas of music, drama, dance, choral speaking, or graphic arts. A workshop generally includes a time of 'warming up'—games and exercises designed to set people at ease with themselves and each other. It is difficult to be 'reserved' while miming the milking of a cow or singing a children's song with hand actions. These exercises, however, are not used as artificial 'gimmicks', but are a simple way to draw others into their own lifestyle's childlike spontaneity and freedom from self-consciousness.

They may then teach a simple folk dance, a choral reading of a psalm, or a new song to give fresh ideas for use in the local situation. Perhaps the most significant portion of the workshop is the creation of new

expressions by the group. Using the simple techniques learned earlier, the participants work together to create something which may be used in a worship service. A drama group may mime one of the Scripture readings for the service. A dance group may create a dance to express their joy and praise. Music combining guitar and organ may be prepared by a music group, thus weaving together the traditional and the folk idioms.

In their common task, the group learns much concerning their relationships and creativity. In each group there will be those who are eager to share their ideas and those who are reticent. If their creation is to be a true reflection of the whole group, they must work together. The eager must be sensitive and draw out the ideas of the reticent ; the reticent must take courage and enter into the creative process. Tenderness in receiving each others offerings creates a climate which nourishes creativity ; abrupt or insensitive decisions or comments can cast a blight on the group. Participants often comment that they learned more about each other by creating together.

It is a moment of wonder when a group experiences its creation. ' I didn't know we could do that ', ' I didn't think we had it in us ', ' This is something we could do again ' are often the awed responses. For, though the Fisherfolk leadership may suggest ideas or direction, the group experiences their creation as their own. It is a unique blend of their talents, ideas, relationships, and awareness of the Lord's work to them.

When the creations are used in the regular services, they shed a new light on the definition of liturgy—' the work of the people '. Those dancing, acting or singing experience themselves as an integral part of the worship and draw others into an eagerness to join with them. The result is an occasion of family festivity where everyone feels free to appreciate each other's offerings and to offer his own without self-consciousness.

In addition to liturgy, the Fisherfolk find the arts integral to their teaching. In the teachings of Jesus we see the use he made of the human capacity for imagination. He took the common elements of the daily life of his time—vineyards, banquets, seeds, soil, lamps and bushels—and wove dramas which stayed in the minds of his followers long after more sophisticated arguments would have been forgotten. In the same way, the Fisherfolk seek to express the truths of the Gospel in ways that spark recognition in the minds of the hearers. Thus, the

ancient message may be illustrated by 'parables' woven from the common elements of our lives—cowboys, bank vaults, television and telephones.

The Fisherfolk also find drama valuable in understanding the humanity of the characters of the Scripture. For many of us the 'Fathers of our Faith' have ceased to be humans with feelings, struggles, doubts—people who got up in the morning and washed their faces. Abraham, Noah, and Joshua have assumed the legendary quality of Father Christmas or King Arthur. Their lives may entertain or dazzle us, but we do not expect their God to speak to us as he spoke to them : to touch us, challenge us and change us.

Several plays written and performed by the Fisherfolk assist us in identifying with the humanity of Biblical Characters. One in particular deals with the prophet Jonah. What would it be like to be Jonah ? To receive a call to play an unpopular role ? Their dramatization reveals a man who, like us, is faced with a dilemma : shall he pursue his image of himself or follow the call to speak God's word to his people. In his struggle we can see our own hypocrisy, perplexities, and possibilities. In his choices we can see the choices which we too make.

The arts are also a key to unlock the hearts of children. Children's imaginations are caught in a dance of clowns and balloons, in the drama of a mountain climber who loses his way and hears the Lord's voice, in a puppet play with the characters from C. S. Lewis' land of Narnia. In the Community of Celebration, the home of the Fisherfolk, children comprise one-third of the population. Worship times are geared to include them and they are encouraged to contribute. Surprises emerge—a new song come to a four-year-old child as he sits by a window after a meeting : another new song delights the children and they express enthusiasm by creating a dance for it. Bells, triangles, wood sticks which they can play embellish the simple music as the whole community sings together. For them worship is not something boring and 'adult serious'. It is a time to rejoice before our Father—like children playing at their father's knee. It is a time to express our love spontaneously and to experience His love shining on us. Children who are drawn into this experience aren't restless, noisy or bored. They, too, are free to experience and express love.

This freedom and spontaneity is captured in a poem written by one of the Fisherfolk :

Lord,
you came
not only to give yourself to us
but to give ourselves to us.

we have been
 so hidden
often in holiness
we did not know
how to reach out
as the dance came by

you reach out
 and our hands come
shyly
then laughing
whirling
feet flashing
in unknown wonder

we have been
 so stuck
often in a sterile mind
we could not find
the simple way to life
 (the way to die)

you come among us
 into the stables
 of our tumbledown souls
 and holy them
you make these earthen vessels
 the tabernacle
 of your presence

we have been
 so alone
often in fear
alone in groaning
 for your son
 to break us into freedom of sons

you take our timid offers
 of ourselves
 join us together
 to be your body
 your very flesh

you make of us
 the sure trumpet sound
 heralding
 the kingdom come

MARTHA KEYS,

Copyright Celebration Services (Yeldall).

The Fisherfolk are members of The Community of Celebration—a community based in Great Britain and primarily involved in church renewal. Many of them were members of the Church of the Redeemer, in Houston, Texas. They were invited to England by the Bishop of Coventry in 1972. The Fisherfolk travel by invitation to churches, conferences, and festivals of praise throughout Great Britain and other parts of Europe.* Skilled in the arts in worship, teaching, and dialogue, they use these expressions to present the 'good news' which they experience in their common life.

In conclusion, it seems important to add that the Fisherfolk's use of the arts in worship in no way disregards or disparages the traditional forms of worship. Their artistic offerings are meant to be to worship as salt to a savoury meal—to bring out the flavours that slumber, lulled to sleep perhaps by familiarity. Their music, drama, and dance awaken us and call us to give ourselves—'to reach out as the dance comes by'. As we reach out, in the context of worship, we encounter ourselves, each other and our Lord in new dimensions. Thus, the Fisherfolk find the wedding of the arts and worship to be one step toward the integration of ourselves as whole people worshipping our Lord with all that we are.

YELDALL MANOR, TWYFORD, BERKS.

MARTHA KEYS,

Community of Celebration.

* Some readers may remember that the Fisherfolk took part in The Franciscan Festival in Canterbury in September, 1974.

Theatre of Life

Men must know that in this theatre of man's life it is reserved only for God and angels to be lookers-on.

FRANCIS BACON.

Christopher Fry



IN 1950, when Christopher Fry had written six of his ten plays, one of his most sympathetic critics wrote that 'the poet is best understood in the light of the Anglican tradition . . . the points of reference to be made concern sensibility and imagination rather than 'intellectual belief' (Derek Stanford, *Christopher Fry, An Appreciation*, pp. 29—30). I take this dictum as an excuse for treating of his religious thought in an Anglican journal, while not committing us to the judgment implied on the Anglican tradition.

Fry's corpus of plays, now presumably complete, divide into two groups of five. The comedies are not ostensibly concerned with religious themes, although the foundation of a religious attitude can be discerned in all of them (*A Phoenix Too Frequent*, 1946, and the quartet of 'seasonal' plays, *The Lady's Not for Burning*, 1948 ; *Venus Observed*, 1949 ; *The Dark is Light Enough*, 1954 ; and *A Yard of Sun*, 1970). The other five are wholly or partly concerned with aspects of Christianity. *The Boy with a Cart*, 1939, tells the story of S. Cuthman's journey to found a church in Sussex ; *The First Born*, 1946, the story of the Exodus from Moses' reappearance at the court of Pharaoh to the death of the firstborn ; *Thor, with Angels*, 1948, recounts an imaginary Jute's conversion to Christianity at the time of the coming of Augustine ; in *A Sleep of Prisoners*, 1951, four prisoners of war in a church dream themselves into biblical stories ; and *Curtmantle*, 1961, tells again the story of Henry II and Becket.

I want first to describe the general mood or attitude that runs through all the plays, then to consider the retelling of Christian stories, and finally to look at his treatment of specifically Christian themes.

(i)

Basic to Fry is an attitude towards all creation which sees it as one, a unity with itself and with man. In the religious plays this is explicitly extended to a unity with an immanent God, as in the first chorus of the earliest play :

' We have felt the joint action of the root and sky, of man
And God . . .

In first and last twilight, before wheels have turned
Or after they are still, we have discerned :

Guessed at divinity working above the wind,
Working under our feet . . .'. (*The Boy with a Cart*, p. 1).

But this attitude underlies all the comedies too, and is particularly apparent in the 'spring' play, *The Lady's Not for Burning*, for instance :

' . . . Show me no luxuries. It will be enough
If you spare me a spider, and when it spins I'll see
The six days of Creation in a web
And a fly caught on the seventh . . .'. (p. 69).

Again and again come images drawn from nature, of dawn, growth, life in trees, animals, stars.

But with this positive attitude to God's world comes also the questioning, 'the great accusation' of Hugh Montefiore :

'What spirit made the hawk? a bird obedient
To grace, a bright lash on the cheek of the wind
And drawn and ringed with feathered earth and sun,
An achievement of eternity's birdsmith. But did he
Also bleak the glittering charcoal of the eyes
And sharpen beak and claws on his hone of lust?
What language is life? Not one I know.
A quarrel in God's nature'. (*The First Born*, p. 27).

Similarly in *A Sleep of Prisoners* :

'Sky's hollow filled as far as for ever
With rolling light : place without limit,
Time without pity :
And did you say all for the sake of our good condition,
All for our two-footed prosperity?
Well, we should prosper, considering
The torment squandered on our prospering.
From squid to eagle the ravening is on.
We are all pain-fellows, but nothing you dismay,
Man is to prosper . . .'. (pp. 13—14).

Inevitably this brings into the attitude a perpetual questioning of the meaning of man's existence—the passage just quoted is sparked off by the question 'What's man to be?' receiving the answer 'Content and full'. Similarly in *The First Born*, when the Pharaoh says that he has 'put men to a purpose, who otherwise

Would not have had the least meaning', Moses replies :
'Not the least meaning, except the meaning
Of the breath in your lungs, the mystery of existing
At all'. (p. 15).

Stanford asserts that 'The poet considers himself engaged in a scheme by which the public mind is slowly reconditioned to mystery' (op. cit. p. 31). Partial answers are continually given; thus Moses continues by claiming:

'It is the individual man

In his individual freedom who can mature

With his warm spirit the unripe world', and when the Pharaoh's son says to him 'You mean I'm of no value

Except to be Egypt's ornament', Moses replies

'Of much value; infinite'.

Certainly in this play it is made plain that the meaning of existence is more than, say, success (Miriam's son becoming an Egyptian officer) or love (a Syrian bride arrives for the Pharaoh's son). The value of the individual is one of the main themes of *The Dark is Light Enough*, a play about divided personal and national loyalties during the Hungarian rising of 1848. The central figure, the Countess, is determined to protect the deserter who was her daughter's unsatisfactory first husband, just for his value as a human being.

Inevitably too the questioning of man's existence raises the tension between feeling at home in the world and feeling an alien. In *Venus Observed*, which a critic in the *Tablet* described as being 'about displaced persons' (cf. Stanford, op. cit. p. 208), the Duke ponders the consequences:

'If being alive is a question, heaven-bent

For an answer, and the question is a man's

Estrangement in a world

Where everything else conforms . . .'. (p. 53).

It is one of the main causes of the quarrel in *A Sleep of Prisoners* before the soldiers fall asleep that David complains of Peter 'Any damn where he makes himself at home' (p. 4). Cymen, in *Thor, with Angels*, complains in opposite strain to his pagan gods,

'You make us to be the eternal alien

In our own world . . .'. (p. 38),

and after his conversion he says he

'felt our lonely flesh

Welcome to creation. The fearful silence

Became the silence of great sympathy,

The quiet of God and man in the mutual world'.

(pp. 51—52).

Life then is seen by Fry as a very complex business, 'all shapes of shapes and all Shades of shades' (*A Phoenix Observed* p. 2). Eleanor in *Curtmantle*, says to Henry and Becket :

'Consider complexity, delight in difference.
Fear, for God's sake, your exact words.
Do you think you can draw lines on the living water?'
(p. 47).

and in fact Becket has earlier urged on Henry that

'There is a true and living
Dialectic between the Church and the state
Which has to be argued for ever in good part.
It can't be broken off or turned
Into a clear issue to be lost or won.
It's the nature of man that argues ;
The deep roots of disputation
Which dug in the dust, and formed Adam's body . . .
The truth, like everything else, being of three dimensions,
And men so placed, they^v can stake their lives on the shape
of it
Until by a shift of their position, the shape
Of truth has changed'. (pp. 21—22).

In the foreword to this, his last play, Fry says 'To try to recreate what has taken place in (the twelfth century) world (or indeed to write about life at all) is to be faced by the task of putting a shape on almost limitless complexity. The necessity for the shaping—for 'making a play of it'—is inherent in us, because pattern and balance are pervading facts of the universe. It is tempting to make a misleading simplification . . . '.

But one message is meant to run through all the comedies, let alone the religious plays, and that is that light and love triumph. It is clear in the first three that love triumphs : over the death-wish in *A Phoenix Too Frequent*, which is set in a tomb where a widow is determined to mourn her husband for ever, and in *The Lady's Not for Burning*, where one of the two principal characters wants to be hung and the other is threatened with burning as a witch ; love and acceptance win in the 'autumn' comedy, *Venus Observed*. It is less obvious in the 'winter' play, *The Dark is Light Enough*, despite the poet's claim that it tells of a distillation of dark into light. In the late, 'summer', play, *A Yard of Sun*, a more realistic setting, Siena in 1946, points to renewal in the

principal characters, though it is only partially realised when the play ends. Still, the background of the play is

‘ The week of the Palio—the sensational week
When the city celebrates an immortal identity,
When it hymns our power of survival over oppressors,
Defeat and death ’. (p. 31).

Moses’ final words in *The First Born* perhaps sum up this whole mood or attitude of the playwright :

‘ What does eternity bear witness to,
If not at last to hope ? ’. (p. 86).

(ii)

In five of his plays Fry retells Christian stories. Three however need not be looked at here. *The Boy with a Cart*, is a simple and straightforward dramatisation of the story of S. Cuthman ; *Thor, with Angels*, is wholly fictional and neither Augustine and his monks, nor Bertha and Ethelbert, appear. *Curtmantle* certainly deserves analysis for the historical basis of Fry’s dramatisation, but there is nothing theologically significant in the actual retelling of the story.

It is very different with the two plays in which stories from the Old Testament are retold : shewing so well how the Scriptures are not only ‘ inspired ’ but also ‘ a field where inspiration works ’ (Hodgson). Doctor Dillistone, in *Dramas of Salvation*, speaks of how ‘ it is possible for later ages, in the light of widening experience and deepening understanding, to see how a narrative, valid in its own original context, taking on new relevancies in later circumstances, may yet gain a supremely appropriate application in some particular historical crisis ’ (p. 23). One of the Biblical ‘ dramas ’ considered by Dillistone in this book is the test of Abraham in the command to sacrifice Isaac ; he details the retelling of this story in Jewish Haggadah and by Kierkegaard and by Wilfrid Owen (the latter incorporated into Britten’s *War Requiem*). This is one of the four stories that appear in *A Sleep of Prisoners* ; no doubt its power of reinterpretation derives not only from the dramatic nature of the story but also from the terse way in which it is told, leaving as Dillistone points out so much to the imagination.

The First Born is the simpler of the two plays. It uses the conventional methods of historical novels : extra characters are introduced—Pharaoh’s sister, Anath, who originally found Moses in the bullrushes, his daughter, Teusret, and the firstborn himself, Rameses.

On the Hebrew side besides Moses, Aaron and Miriam there is Miriam's son, Shendi. A few minor characters make an appearance. Un-historical but plausible assumptions are made ; the most important, that Moses before fleeing to Midian after killing the Egyptian overseer had been a successful general of Pharaoh, had indeed been brought up as an Egyptian prince, and so had been for young Rameses a sort of uncle. An effective dramatic sub-plot is concerned with Shendi, promoted from an ill-treated labourer to an officer at Rameses' desire—and then himself ill-treating his fellow Hebrews until on the night of the Passover his Jewishness reasserts itself.

One of the main themes of the play is in fact maturing, growing, learning to be what you are ; Moses had first found this years before when 'he Killed his Egyptian self in the self of that Egyptian And buried his body in the sand' (p. 6). Now he knows the Hebrews' need is

'To confront ourselves, to create within ourselves
Existence which cannot fail to be fulfilled'. (p. 31).

'My people shall become themselves', he says, 'By reason of their own god who speaks within them'. (p. 41). When the plagues begin, he knows that 'Our lives are being lived into our lives' (p. 45).

Undoubtedly this is a valid theme to draw from the story of how the Hebrews were freed from captivity ; and so are the other main pre-occupations of the play. There is the use of power, implacably, in the interests of the nation, by the Pharaoh, in the service of God, by Moses, and finally dominating the play, implacably also by God according to his will. There is the theme which Fry draws attention to in the foreword of the second edition : 'Rameses is the innocence, humanity, vigour, and worth which stand on the enemy side, not altering the justice or necessity of Moses' cause, but linking the ways of men and the ways of God with a deep and urgent question mark'. And there is the motif of death and resurrection, which needs to be noticed in the next section.

A Sleep of Prisoners is more complicated and more remarkable in its retelling of biblical stories. Four prisoners of war are locked in a church as the play begins. Very soon the hot-tempered David King quarrels with Peter Able, the dreamy intellectual, because he makes himself so easily at home, and nearly kills him. They all then sleep, and in turn dream. The first three dreams retell the quarrel and fight from the different viewpoints of the dreamers.

Old Meadows, the simple soul, dreams first. He dreams the story of Cain and Abel, with himself as the Creator. Corporal Adams, the man under authority and in authority, becomes Adam. Poignantly Adam tells of the frustration of everyman in a world he hardly understands :

‘ We could see our own shapes, near enough,
But not the road. The road kept on dividing
Every yard or so. Makes it long.
We expected nothing like it, sir.
Ill-equipped, naked as the day,
It was all over and the world was on us
Before we had time to take cover . . .
Excuse me, sir, but there’s some talk of a future.
I’ve had no instructions ’. (p. 11).

When Peter, as Abel, and David, as Cain, are dicing to ‘ put it to the High and Mighty . . . to know who’s favoured ’, Adam naturally inclines to Cain :

‘ He goes in the mould of passion as you made him.
He can walk this broken world as easily
As I and Eve the ivory light of Eden ’. (p. 15).

When Cain is killing Abel, Adam is powerless to interfere : ‘ a father unequipped to save ’. During the game of dice, David-Cain, as unthinking force, lashes out against opposition to his will : ‘ Life is a hypocrite if I can’t live/The way it moves me, then suspects the very conditions of life ’ : Keep me clean of God, creation’s crooked ’. He suspects Peter-Abel’s subtlety will get him down somehow : ‘ all the unbiddable roaming voices up and down/Can live their lives and welcome/While I go pestered and wondering down hill/Like a half-wit angel strapped to the back of a mule ’. Finally, when Abel wins, he suspects trickery : ‘ I saw the smiles that went between/You and the top air ’ (p. 16). When Meadows-God calls him and punishes him he expostulates with the natural reply of the flesh : ‘ I loved life/With a good rage you gave me . . . How was I expected to guess/That what I am you didn’t want ? ’. But not even unbridled force is outside the power of salvation : God says ‘ My word is/Bring him in alive ’, in setting the mark on him (p. 19).

The second dream is David’s. He justifies and glamourises his force as King David ; Peter Able becomes Absalom, the traitor. The corporal becomes the king’s lieutenant, Joab. Meadows does not figure in the dream : brute force dismisses simplicity as not worth bothering about. The residue of humanity which made the real-life

David King contrite after nearly killing Peter Able becomes King David's realisation that we can never be sure the defeat of the enemy is victory.

Peter dreams third, and similarly justifies himself as Isaac, the helpless victim ; but Peter's intellect can be fairer than David's force (after all, it was Abel God favoured), and so David as Abraham becomes not an unthinking instrument of a cruel God but the reluctant power of historical necessity :

' I am history's wish and must come true,
And I shall hate as long as hate
Is history, though, God, it drives
My life away like a beaten dog ' . . .
. . . ' For our better freedom
Which makes us living men : for what will be
The heaven on earth, I have to bind you . . . ' (p. 31).

The corporal, naturally, is the authority-figure of the angel with ' new instructions ', but warning that even free Isaac will find ' the angry cities hold him '. Old Meadows appears in an epilogue as a donkey man : the intellectual can appreciate but not understand simplicity.

This very beautiful retelling of the Abraham-Isaac story does not in fact highlight the theological centre of the story, the personal faith of Abraham in God, or not to the extent that Dillistone claims for Kierkegaard's reinterpretations, but it does not twist the story with a different end, as in Wilfrid Owen's poem, where Abraham refuses to sacrifice the ram of pride ' but slew his son, And half the seed of Europe, one by one '.

The last dream is the corporal's, and does not reinterpret the original fight. Instead he dreams of the Last Judgment, with himself, Peter and David as the three Israelites in the Burning Fiery Furnace. David, true to character, rails under judgment against impotence : ' Let me, dear God, be active/And seem to do right, whatever damned result ' (p. 41), but in the end is forced to admit that in the light of judgment he can see that ' To be strong beyond all action is the strength/To have ' (p. 47). Peter and Adams do not have such explicit judgment on their characters, which is a weakness in the treatment of the story. Meadows appears at the climax of the play as ' man under God's command ', and gives a superb series of statements and images of hope. We can come through if we have ' the patience and the love ', or at least ' the honesty . . ./Not to say we do a thing for all men's sake when we do it

only/For our own ' (p. 46). We admire the ' Figures of wisdom back in the old sorrows . . ./But never suffer them : suffer instead/A stubborn aberration ' and then comes the cry of the potentiality of men ' O God, the fabulous wings unused,/Folded in the heart ' (p. 47). Good, though ' unguarded,/As defenceless as a naked man ', ' grows and makes, and bravely/Persuades, beyond all tilt of wrong :/Stronger than anger, wiser than strategy,/Enough to subdue cities and men/If we believe it with a long courage of truth ' (p. 48). And the final assertion is that ' The human heart can go to the lengths of God . . ./Affairs are now soul size. The enterprise/Is exploration into God ' (p. 49).

Of course, from the viewpoint of the retelling of Christian story, this dream only uses the Burning Fiery Furnace as a launching point for the experience of judgment and beyond that of hope (There are passing references to Nebuchanezzar). But this powerful biblical image, together with those of the first murder and of the father's near sacrifice of his son, have been transmuted by the playwright into strong new assertions of religious interpretation. The image of the rebellious son does not in my judgment come over so successfully in this play. The whole work however is a lasting tribute to the power of the biblical stories to inspire new insights.

(iii)

In the five religious plays a number of key Christian themes are brought in. I want to consider Fry's handling of revelation, conversion, sacrifice, and death and resurrection.

Cuthman, in *The Boy with a Cart*, has two experiences of God. The first comes when he has obeyed the feeling that he and his mother must journey eastwards and they are on their journey. He is cutting willow shoots to make a rope of withies to pull the cart when suddenly

' The sapling flickered in my hand, timber
And flesh seemed of equal and old significance.
At that place and then, I tell you, Mother,
God rode up my spirit and drew in
Beside me. His breath met on my breath, moved
And mingled . . . ' (p. 21).

As a result of this revelation he knows that where the rope breaks he must settle and build a church. The second revelation comes when he is again obeying the command of God and building the church. Christ the carpenter appears and lifts the kingpost back in position. Cuthman

has always been a Christian ; Cymen, in *Thor, with Angels*, has his moment of revelation at the climax of his conversion. With Moses, too, in *The First Born*, revelation comes first not in a situation of obedience but at the moment of conversion. For Moses, this had been when he saw the Jewish labourer killed by the Egyptian overseer. Anath describes this in terms both of turning—metanoia—and of vision :

‘ Moses turned—turned to what was going on—

Turned himself and his world turtle. It was

As though an inward knife scraped his eyes clean ’ (p. 5).

It is a sudden and unprepared conversion, unlike that of Cymen which has built up during the play, although also through unsought moments. First he finds himself sparing the life of the Briton in battle, then his toast to the sun turns into ‘ Let us love one another ’. Next, when he is telling Merlin how weak was Arthur’s Christian land, he finds himself saying that he is inflicted with ‘ A violence of humility arrogantly/ Demanding all that I am or possess or have ambition for ’ (p. 28). Soon, when praying to the gods he upbraids them for their passion for death, and throws down their altar. At that moment the messenger of Ethelbert summons him to hear Augustine, when the final revelation comes that seals the conversion.

Together with the experiences of revelation that come in *A Sleep of Prisoners* to Cain, Abraham (again at a moment of obedience), and the three in the furnace, these episodes convey the message that revelation is liable to come at a crisis in life, and is part of a very deliberate plan of God’s providence. Conversion too is an act of God descending upon a man and forcing him into new ways.

Sacrifice is one of the central themes of both *Thor, with Angels*, and of *The First Born*, as well as of the Abraham dream in *A Sleep of Prisoners*. Cymen’s Jutish family in fact spend most of the play trying to get him to sacrifice the British prisoner to their gods, and do so themselves when he is away hearing Augustine. It is the gods’ insistence on sacrifice that Cymen is gradually revolting from, seeing it as only a symbol of death until he hears the tale of Christ’s sacrifice and realises that

‘ sacrifice/Can only perfectly be made by God

And has been so made, by God

To God in the body of God with man,

On a tree set up at the four crossing roads

Of earth, heaven, time and eternity

Which meet upon that cross ’ (p. 52).

In *The First Born* the treatment is considerably more subtle, because it is woven in with the theme of death and resurrection, which dominates the play. Perhaps it is truer to say that death dominates the play, from the first words between Anath and Teusret as they hear the cry of a workman falling off the pyramid being built for the Pharaoh's tomb, through such moments as Rameses' first appearance announcing that he has been wildfowling and trying to peer into the significance of the death of the bird (Miriam later compares the Hebrews to wildfowl). Gradually images of rebirth are worked in, from the reminiscences of Moses' first rebirth in the baptismal ark and of his conversion, which is described also as a death of his Egyptian self, out of which the Hebrew was 'smitten', 'vomited', 'whipped off'—rebirth is as messy an experience as birth. Actual physical death has at first seemed a mere fact of life to the Egyptians, though to Moses always a question, but when the acts of God begin to be revealed as Moses presses on with his task, the suspicion grows in him that they are the way through to authentic life. In other words, death can have the character of a sacrifice which releases new power. This is of course consummated with the death of the firstborn, of Rameses, and it is the very vigour of the life of Rameses which assures Moses, after a momentary doubt, that the death of this vigour is indeed the way through to new life. His final acceptance of this is as far as many Christians can go :

'I do not know why the necessity of God
Should feed on grief ; but it seems so. And to know it
Is not to grieve less, but to see grief growing big
With what has died, and in some spirit differently
Bear it back to life ' (p. 86).

The depth of Fry's thought has been missed by many critics, probably because they have been put off by the richness of the language especially in the early comedies, assuming that this was a cloak for shallowness, and also because they have commented only on the comedies, and so missed the explicit Christian frame of reference which the religious plays provide. For those who are willing to take him seriously, Fry provides many shafts of light onto the state of the world, and of men, and of God's dealings with men. It is a pity his plays are not performed more often—*A Sleep of Prisoners* needs only a typical church and four actors—but they are also plays to be read, and in reading many subtleties can be appreciated which flash by too quickly on the stage.

The Baron and The Poor Man

AMONG the counsels given by the Abbé Huvelin to Baron von Hügel when the latter was visiting him in Paris in 1886 is a remark which is liable to strike anyone who is interested in S. Francis. 'Yes', said the Abbé, 'there have been saints, and even great saints, of your type. S. Francis of Assisi . . . *there* is a great saint wholly cast in the mould of life and movement, light and warmth'.¹ At first sight the compassion would seem paradoxical in the extreme. What can there be in common between the two men? On the one side there is the massive, complex, aristocratic intellectual, half English, half German, whose thought, suspected of modernism in his own day, is becoming increasingly influential amongst theologians at the present time; on the other the little poor man of Assisi, with his passionate, intuitive vision of things, and his deep distrust of scholars and their habit of amassing books. Yet the judgement of a man like Huvelin is not to be lightly dismissed. His ministry in Paris was constantly restricted by recurrent ill health, but his influence as a spiritual guide was incalculable, not only in the life of von Hügel, but also in that of Charles de Foucauld, and it is difficult to think of the twentieth century Church without him. Evelyn Underhill who was herself indebted to von Hügel in a way similar to von Hügel's indebtedness to Huvelin, says of this comparison of the Baron with S. Francis, 'It is the opinion of a saint, a realist, for whom God was everything—about two other saints, also realists for whom God was everything; and neither of whom were able to exclude any aspect of his creation from the sphere of their interest and their love. Plainly it is not an opinion based on surface characters, but on some interior likeness which entirely escapes the casual glance'.²

Before we come to examine this 'interior likeness' between the two men more closely, it might be as well to notice that in our century S. Francis has exercised a fascination for Christians of all kinds, among them a number of distinguished theologians. In the Church of England, Charles Raven would be an outstanding example; a man who, like von Hügel combined an intense interest in theology with an

¹ F. von Hügel. *Selected Letters 1896—1924*, edited with a Memoir by Bernard Holland (London 1927), p. 60.

² Evelyn Underhill, *Mixed Pasture, Twelve Essays and Addresses*, (London 1933), p. 156.

equal concern for the natural sciences, a man in his own day also suspect as a modernist but now beginning to be more justly valued. But the attraction of S. Francis is not felt only by Anglicans and Protestants. Two of the most eminent theologians of the Russian diaspora, Vladimir Lossky and Paul Evdokimov were both strongly drawn to S. Francis, despite certain evidently Western traits in his character. There is something here which demands further investigation and reflection.

Evelyn Underhill in the essay from which we have already quoted is clear enough where the affinity between von Hügel and S. Francis is to be found. It lies in the fact that both men, in their utterly different ways seek to do justice to the reality both of this world and of the world beyond this one. Their complete dedication to the service of God does not exclude a clear-sighted view of the world which lies around us. 'Both the medieval friar and the modern scholar were penetrated by a sense of the realness, more the sacredness, of the natural as well as the supernatural order ; as something which was not to be fled from but to be loved without possessiveness, with an unlimited and humble tenderness, cleansed of all desire'.³ She goes on to quote one of von Hügel's greatest and most characteristic sayings, 'God is a stupendously rich Reality ; he is the God of nature, as well as the God of supernature', and she adds, 'S. Francis would have understood and welcomed that. Every movement of his life declares its truth'.⁴

In another essay devoted directly to the teaching of von Hügel, Evelyn Underhill refers to the projected title of his Gifford Lectures, which in fact were never completed, 'The Reality of Finites and the Reality of God'. Von Hügel detected a strong tendency in the Christianity of recent centuries, Catholic and Protestant alike, to stress the reality of God in opposition to the reality of this finite, historical world ; a tendency to make much of the doctrine of redemption to the exclusion of the doctrine of creation. But any full human and Christian life demands both. 'In all his teaching about life, the Baron never forgot the truth, that sanity and lowliness require our reverent acceptance of both levels of our mixed experience ; not an arrogant choice between them. By a succession of images . . . he struggled to convey

³ *ibid.* p. 156.

⁴ *ibid.* p. 157.

⁵ *ibid.* p. 213.

the steady union of a graded world : the need of nature and grace, sense and spirit, "the seen and unseen, the Good and the Better or Best"—held together not set in opposition—for the maturing of man's spirit and the full living out of his peculiar call. "A polarity, a tension, a friction, a one thing at work in distinctly another thing"—this was for him a fundamental and inevitable character of our spiritual life'. We begin to see the force of two more of the sayings which the Baron recorded from Huvelin's counsel. 'There is no deeper or more dangerous enemy for Christianity than anything which reduces it or makes it narrow' and 'For you, the spirit to follow, is a spirit of blessing all creation'.⁶

Here is a vision of Christian life which insists on the claims both of nature and of grace. It is a religion which encourages us to love God in all things *and* beyond all things, and which knows that we shall never be able to do either properly unless we are aiming in some measure to do both. We shall not truly find God in this world unless we are willing to turn away from it, to seek him in and for himself alone. But we shall never truly find God beyond this world unless we recognise that he is coming to us and making himself known in and through its most prosaic and earthly circumstances. In contemporary terms we might say that the horizontal and the vertical dimensions of Christian experiences are inseparable and essential to one another. There is and there must be both a going out to others, and a returning in to oneself, a movement of turning away from the world to God, and of re-discovering of the world in God.

The inclusiveness of such a vision is a costly not an easy thing. Evelyn Underhill sees it in the life of S. Francis in relation to two crucial events ; the calling heard in prayer before the crucifix at San Damiano, and the mystery of La Verna. 'His whole career, as I see it, is poised on these two strange events. The first drew him out towards the visible world, to help mend and serve it. The second made him the mysterious partner of an invisible, rescuing love'. Whenever we get him really speaking his mind, he is never far from the Cross ; the underlying tension of his life. 'Yes, there it is ; no need to go further' said Huvelin. 'Sanctity and suffering are the same thing. You will do no good to others save in suffering and through suffering'. We draw very near the real Francis, though not near the popular notion of

⁶ *op. cit.* pp. 61 and 62.

Francis, when we meditate on these words.⁷ In words of considerable power she goes on to speak further of this the essential love of Francis' holiness. 'The entire growth of Francis was towards the point at which, as that strange phrase in his legend says, he was "transformed by the kindling of his mind into the image of the Crucified", embracing and harmonising in one movement of self-abandoned love, the splendour of God and the deep suffering of man. That is Charity, the outpouring passion of generous love at its full height, breadth and width; a passion which is the essence of eternal life, and reflects back to a meta-physical source. S. Francis, says the *Fioretti* in a famous passage, offered his followers "the chalice of life"; and those who had the courage to drink it, "saw in profound contemplation the abyss of the infinite divine light", a strange phrase for the sort of gift which the S. Francis of popular sentiment . . . is supposed to have made the world'.⁸ Here is a vision of S. Francis which rightly sees that grace and nature, joy and suffering, cross and resurrection must come together into one, if ever we are to understand the profound unity and wholeness, the liberating power of his life.

Already we can begin to perceive something of the attraction of S. Francis for a theologian like Charles Raven, who was trying to make his fellow Christians recognise the proper claims of the natural sciences, the necessary place of the doctrine of creation in Christian life. Again in the refusal to say either God *or* men, either this world *or* the world to come which characterises the saint, we can see the reason for a deep affinity between von Hügel and many of the Russian religious thinkers of the last hundred years, who have constantly waged a double battle against anti-religious humanism, and anti-humanist religion. More specifically in the way in which cross and resurrection are held together, and man's turning towards God is seen as implying the raising up and not the abandonment of the creation, we recognise close parallels with the renewed patristic theology, which has been worked out by many Orthodox writers in the last thirty or forty years. Summing up the thought of one of the greatest of Byzantine theologians, Maximus the Confessor, Vladimir Lossky says 'Man is not a being isolated from the rest of creation; by his very nature he is bound up with the whole of the universe, and S. Paul bears witness that "the whole creation awaits the future glory which will be revealed in the sons of God"'.⁹ This

⁷ *op. cit.* p. 161.

⁸ *ibid.* pp. 161—162.

⁹ Romans 8 : 18—22.

cosmic awareness has never been absent from Eastern spirituality, and is given expression in theology as well as in liturgical poetry, in iconography and, perhaps, above all in the ascetical writings of the masters of the spiritual life of the Eastern Church . . . In his way to union with God, man in no way leaves creation aside but gathers together in his love the whole cosmos disordered by sin that it may at last be transfigured by grace'.¹⁰ Here we have a note which is profoundly Franciscan.

And then we begin to notice other things in the Franciscan sources which make us want to reflect more deeply on the relation between S. Francis and the patristic tradition, Greek as well as Latin which lay behind him. Details may catch our attention. For instance, we may notice the phrase already quoted from the *Fioretti* about 'the abyss of the infinite divine light', and may recall how central a place the theme of 'the uncreated light' has in the spirituality of the Eastern Church. Or again there are the remarks made by S. Francis when he compares a righteous man to an icon. 'In pictures of God and the blessed Virgin painted on wood, God and the Blessed Virgin are honoured and God and the Blessed Virgin are held in mind, yet the word and the painting ascribe nothing to themselves, because they are just wood and paint; so the servant of God is a kind of painting, that is a creature of God in which God is honoured for the sake of his benefits. But he ought to ascribe nothing to himself, just like the wood or the painting, but should render honour and glory to God alone . . .'.¹¹ The person to whom such a comparison naturally suggested itself was evidently well acquainted with the theology which lies behind the veneration of icons on the Orthodox Church (that the honour paid to the icons passes to the one whom the icon portrays). It seems that he must also have been familiar with the actual making of icons, paintings on wood which are deliberately created so as to be vehicles and focal points of prayer.

This question about icons is perhaps more crucial and central than it might at first appear. In the flowering of art which followed on the period of S. Francis that particular iconic understanding of the nature of religious painting was very soon lost. There is a quality about some of the very earliest representations of S. Francis and S. Clare, a transparent and symbolic quality, shows that they stand clearly within the

¹⁰ V. Lossky. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. (1957), pp. 110—111.

¹¹ *Scripta Leonis, Rufini et Angeli*. ed. R. B. Brooke (Oxford 1970), p. 273.

iconographical tradition of the undivided Church. This is a quality which the later paintings, however beautiful in their own right, fail to convey. They become aesthetic works to be admired, not sacramental objects through which the saints approach us and we are able to draw near to them. The parallel yet different developments in Byzantine and Italian art in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have been noticed by many writers. There was a renaissance in both parts of the Christian world, but whereas the growing humanism of the West more and more deprived religious painting of its theological and spiritual content, in the last centuries of the East Christian Empire exactly the reverse seems to have happened. Patrick Leigh Fermor, for instance, a man with no theological axe to grind, remarks on this particular quality in late Byzantine painting 'As though by magic it humanised gods, angels, saints and mortals without draining them of a flicker of their spirituality . . . It is a miracle of delicate balance', which moves the viewer as well as exalting him.¹²

In the painting of an icon the delicate balance of holding together natural and supernatural, seen and unseen, creation and redemption is particularly vital. It involves, in von Hügel's words 'a one thing at work in distinctly another thing'. It is small wonder that in the Byzantine East at this period the miracle should rather frequently occur, for the theology and the spirituality of that time meditated long and deeply on the place of the body in man's spiritual development, and on the nature of the light revealed on Tabor in the face of Jesus Christ. In the West, however, this balance seems more and more to have been upset through the growth of a form of humanism which lost the vision of the transfiguration of the flesh. At a certain purely aesthetic level the works of the painters of the Umbrian School are triumphs of human creativity. But they have ceased to be windows opening on to the world of heavenly realities. We have only to place them beside the frescoes at Mistra or the icons of Rublev to perceive at once how much has been lost.

Do we have here a clue to the secret of S. Francis? Is it, maybe, that to understand S. Francis aright we need to see him more against the background of the centuries which went before him, than of the centuries which followed after, when for all the wealth of devotion which his example evoked it seems as though his heritage was somehow

¹² Patrick Leigh Fermor, *Mani. Travels in the Southern Peloponnese*, (London 1958) p. 229.

divided, imperilled and in part obscured? In the remark of the Abbé Huvelin's which was quoted at the beginning of this article the dots which indicate the omission of a phrase cover the words 'I do not say Franciscans'. Doubtless the Abbé would not have wished to make too sharp a contrast between the saint and his followers but reading the pages of Doctor Moorman's great history of the Franciscan Order one is forced at times to feel that there was something in the whole development of the thought and life of the Western Church in the later Middle Ages which fought against the full comprehension of the message of the Saint. The growing legalism of the Latin tradition, the rationalism of much scholastic theology, the tendency to set one thing over against another, action and contemplation, involvement and withdrawal, community and solitude, for instance all this made it increasingly difficult to live by the inclusiveness of the original vision. As I have said in another context, the theology of a Maximus the Confessor would, it seems to me, provide a way of holding together the different facets of the saint's character, his love for all creation, his devotion to the cross, his joy in the resurrection which would enable us to see more deeply the unity and wholeness of that amazing life, 'Embracing and harmonising in one movement of self-abandoned love, the splendour of God and the deep suffering of man'.

It certainly seems, as Benedict Englezakis suggested in a recent issue of THE FRANCISCAN, that the poor man of Assisi has a crucial role to play in the mutual rediscovery of one another on the part of Christians of the Orthodox East and Christians of the West both Catholic and Protestant. What may be the questions which the figure of S. Francis poses to the Orthodox is not for an Anglican to say. To us at least he may suggest that the tradition of the Eastern Church with its consistently cosmic vision of the work of Christ and the Spirit, its refusal to separate the theology of the Cross from the theology of the glory, its deep conviction that the sacrament of the altar is inseparable from the sacrament of our brother has much to teach us, not least in coming to understand the things which we have received from him. The intuition that we need to hold together in one, aspects of faith and life which too often become opposed to one another, which was so characteristic of the thought of von Hügel, finds in the Orthodox tradition a powerful confirmation. It is exemplified incomparably in the life of S. Francis. In all the diversity of their ways the Baron and the Poor Man both alike bear witness to that 'stupendously rich Reality' which is God.

Both alike liberate within us the possibility of sharing more deeply in that reconciling, unifying work which is brought about by the creative and redeeming power of grace. In this particular quality of their witness they appeal to something deeply rooted in the Anglican longing for a synthesis of opposites, and seem to have a particular message to the Roman Catholic Church in these years which follow Vatican II.

CANTERBURY.

CANON A. M. ALLCHIN.

For Francis, Assisi '71

If sometimes, with that exquisite
irony that marks a saint,
you notice what your life has meant
to profiteer and parasite,
peddling sweet oleograph—
do you laugh, Poverello, do you laugh ?

You who owned no book
like your master have whole libraries
to explain your genius, wise
surgeons to dissect your every look—
all this world's while
do you smile, Poverello, do you smile ?

When, needing to protect your poverty,
they lavished marble, rich majolica,
towering angel-embraced basilica
(crass response, you say, to humility ?)—
under this burdening death
could you breathe, Poverello, could you breathe ?

In tiny, stark-stone casa, where
love circumscribed its Portiuncola,
modelled simplicitas, munditia,
and to its warmth welcomed sister Clare
and all our leprous world—
are you cold, Poverello, are you cold ?

When you knocked mendicant on some door
 or stopped a wayfarer for alms
 you blessed him, rich beyond his dreams,
 bequeathed blank cheques to Assisi's poor
 down preying-on-pilgrim years—
 so why, Poverello, why the tears ?

Forgive the grace Giotto immortalised,
 Elias made available : forgive—
 who without some reflected sanctity can live ?
 To the vision Cimabue canonised
 say your reluctant ' yes '—
 but bless, Poverello, will you bless ?

GRAHAM DOWELL.

Books

South African Booklets

White Farming : A Case History of Change in South Africa. *By Merle Lipton.*
 South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), 75 cents.

Labour Organisation and the African Worker. *Edited by D. B. Horner.*
 SAIRR, Rand 1.20.

**African Secondary School Leavers : Employment Experiences and Attitudes
 to Employment.** *By Ann Perry.* SAIRR, Rand 1.25.

In her booklet *Merle Lipton* argues that real improvements in the wages of Black farm-workers have accompanied the modernisation of farming in South Africa. She does not deny the feudal conditions under which many of them labour, but in this useful and succinct survey she says that because of these improvements (and the likelihood of more to come) pressure for international boycotts may be misplaced. 25 pages.

Dudley Horner brings together the proceedings of a symposium held last year to discuss labour unrest among South Africa's Black industrial workers. It includes both the papers presented and subsequent discussion from the floor. The academic value of the papers cannot be questioned, but despite both

Black and White representation at the symposium, this booklet in places gives the impression of White lecturers and executives pontificating about Black workers. But it gives interesting insights into the industrial tensions of a plural society. 77 pages.

Educationally, African school-children are in many ways worst off of all South Africa's racial groups ; yet they usually work desperately hard to gain qualifications that employers may think little of. *Ann Perry* in her survey pinpoints many of the frustrations—and aspirations—of African school leavers. Unfortunately, her complex style of writing makes it difficult in places to grasp what she is saying. 94 pages.

TERRY TASTARD, S.S.F.,
Postulant.

Communion in the Heart

Guru and Disciple. *By Abhishiktananda (Henri le Saux O.S.B.).*
S.P.C.K., 1974, £1.25.

This is a fascinating book and one with an open invitation to see and hear and perceive the working of the Spirit of God within another culture and tradition.

The book is in two parts and in each the author relates the external facts, first of all of sitting at the feet of a great Eastern Sage, and then going on a pilgrimage, in the second part, to the source of the Ganges where Mass is offered as a complete and fitting fulfilment to the pilgrimage.

In relating the external facts however, the author, monk and mystic, is challenging the reader to allow the Creator Spirit to speak through them and to reveal areas of being deep within each reader where the Spirit Himself waits for them. This is what the mysteriously

enriching communion within the heart has meant to the author as he sought the Spirit of God in Hinduism.

There is a vivid description of Vanya the Western Sage, when staying with the local Temple priest and his family, finding the nine year old son who was to follow in the priestly line, had become his shadow. 'He would slip in while Vanya was meditating and sit cross-legged facing him and gaze at him caressing him with his eyes. Vanya for his part would try to look deep into those wonderful eyes and beyond them to the sanctuary of the child's heart where so obviously the Lord resided'.

Here is the way of communion to the heart of another whether of the East or West.

FREELAND.

A SISTER C.S.Cl.

Suffering

Tree of Glory. *By Margaret Welch.* Falcon Books, 40p.

This is a slightly disconcerting book. The first section deals with the general question of suffering—why it exists, and how we can deal with it. The next part discusses what our response should be when suffering comes into our own life, or the lives of those around us, and the third gives excellent down-to-earth practical help in facing such matters as illness, hospitalization, the onset of middle age, and finally the last enemy—death. The first section is fairly abstract, and one seems to come to with rather a jolt when faced with the practicalities of the rest of the book. But none-the-less, there is a great deal here for everyone.

The problem of suffering is faced, and the way of acceptance clearly and imaginatively put. But Margaret Welch

deals with what might be termed 'domestic' suffering only; she does not attempt to discuss cosmic or global suffering. Perhaps this is something with which no-one yet can effectively deal. We have not gone far enough in the history of the world.

The advice on caring and sharing in our neighbour's pain and distress is very good. Out of many excellent things, I will quote just one, when the author reminds us, when we feel inadequate in the presence of imminent death, that 'the dying man is still the same person that we knew when he was well'.

COMPTON DURVILLE.

SISTER GABRIEL C.S.F.



*All together at the Novice Conference
at Hilfield in June*